Applying the Ecological Systems Theory to a Child Welfare Agency: Examining the Association Between Organizational Culture and Climate and Individual Level Factors

by

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ABSTRACT

The child welfare workforce is charged with the demanding work of ensuring the safety, well-being, and permanency of maltreated children. Although child welfare work can be rewarding, it is also associated with high levels of stress and burnout, causing challenges to retain staff. Developing organizational cultures and climates within child welfare agencies that are supportive of the workforce and strive to improve outcomes is essential. Applying the ecological systems theory to a child welfare agency provides for an understanding that the agency is comprised of different levels of systems with interactions between the systems. This study examined the association between the individual level factors of job satisfaction, coping skills, self-efficacy, burnout, job stress, and individual affect with organizational level factors including culture and climate. Child welfare workers from one regional area were invited to participate in an online survey utilizing the Comprehensive Organizational Health Assessment and the Positive and Negative Affect Scale. Results indicate that there is an association between each of the individual level factors and the organizational factors. The importance of the role of individual affect was highlighted in the results in that the level of affect reported was associated with corresponding ratings of the perception of the organizational culture and climate. These results provide implications for hiring, training, mentoring, and supervision. This study attempted to assess if the organizational culture and climate of individual child welfare units could be linked to permanency outcomes. This linkage was not possible in this study, however implications to conduct this type of research are made.

Advancing the study of organizational culture and climate beyond the impact of such factors as job satisfaction and retention to linking to direct client outcomes is an emerging and important field of research.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my village that made this possible: to my husband, Jacob Chinn and his never-ending support; to my children, Hailie and Piper who cheered me on; to all those who helped care for my family and for me while I was studying; to my friends, my parents, Angela and Paul Julien, my in-laws, Barbara and Michael Council, and Suzanne Tanaka and Paul Chinn.

I dedicate this dissertation to the child welfare workforce who everyday protect the lives and well-being of vulnerable children and to foster/adoptive parents like my sister, Wendelyn Nichols-Julien who inspired my passion to ensure all children in the child welfare system achieve a safe, nurturing, and permanent home.

But most of all, I dedicate this dissertation to my Grammy, Dr. Jane A. Julien, who inspired me to follow in her footsteps in obtaining my Ph.D. as a strong, independent woman. I am so thankful she witnessed me start the program, and that my Grandad, Dr. Daniel Julien carries her presence, and continues to inspire me in my completion of this journey.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

The United States child welfare system is charged with ensuring the safety, well-being, and permanency of the nation's children (Akin, 2011; Webb, Dowd, Jones Harden, Landsverk & Testa, 2010). The protection of children and an emphasis on child safety through such agencies as the New York City's Children Aid Society in the 1800's and famous cases such as Mary Ellen (Watkins, 1990) was the initial foundation of child welfare (Papke, 1999). The mission of child safety was reinforced and well-being was introduced as the second core mission of child welfare in the Aid to Dependent Children Foster Care amendment to the 1961 Social Security Act. With the 1980 Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act (AACWA) permanency began to resonate as the third core mission (Phillips & Mann, 2013). Recognition of the importance of timely permanency gained attention in the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) of 1997.

The historical evolution of child welfare, traced through literature, law, and policy reveals how the current purpose of the child welfare system was established. A historical review provides perspective and an appreciation of the challenges that the child welfare workforce faces. In addition, understanding the progression of child welfare in the United States demonstrates both the great advances that have occurred in striving for the safety, well-being, and permanency of children, as well as the work that is still needed.

A Brief Review of the History of Child Welfare in the United States

The federal attention to child abuse through the Child Abuse and Prevention Act (CAPTA) of 1974 was the main impetus for the current child welfare system. CAPTA authorized federal funds to states to respond to allegations of child abuse and neglect (Myers, 2008). Although federally mandated child protection is a relatively new phenomenon in the United States, instances of the use of criminal law to ensure child safety are recorded as early as the 1600's (Watkins, 1990), In the 1800's, adoption law began to be used for this purpose.

The earliest reported criminal child abuse case in the United States dates back to 1655 (Watkins, 1990). During colonial times, criminal prosecution was used to combat severe abuse, but it was not until the 1800's that strategies to prevent child abuse emerged (Myers, 2008). Beginning in 1810, the growing number of homeless children and court cases regarding concerns for children's well-being initiated the first custody and adoption laws. This began a shift from the practice of "bounding out," or sending homeless children into indentured servitude towards finding families for children (Papke, 1999; Zainaldin, 1979; Zamostny, O'Brien, Baden, & O'Leary Wiley, 2003).

Two key rulings influenced the development of the first formal adoption law in the United States in 1851. First, an 1810 court case in Pennsylvania commenced the discussion of the discretionary ability of a judge to award custody of a child to someone other than the parents due to maltreatment of the child (Zainaldin, 1979). The second case occurred in 1815 in New York's Supreme Court where the court based its adoption ruling

on the needs of the child rather than the parent (Huard, 1956; Zainaldin, 1979). The focus on the well-being of the child continued in what is now considered to be the first modern adoption law in the United States, the Massachusetts 1851 bill for the adoption of children. The Massachusetts statute emphasized not only the welfare of the child, but also included concern for the qualification of the adoptive parents (Papke, 1999; Zainaldin, 1979). The state's involvement with protecting children from maltreatment thus began the realm of criminal law and further developed in the context of adoption law, before finally emerging as a concern with child protection.

During the mid to late 1800's child welfare agencies and laws for the protection of abused and neglected children began to emerge. Also during this period the profession of Social Work was being established through the first Charity Organization Societies (1877) and the growth of the Settlement House movement (1880) (Popple & Leighninger, 1999). Additionally, in 1866, awareness for animal cruelty was emerging with the establishment of Henry Bergh's foundation of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Popple & Leighninger, 1999). Henry Bergh was also involved in the earliest high-profile child abuse case – Mary Ellen. Although there has been thought that Henry Bergh utilized his animal cruelty foundation to represent Mary Ellen, he rather acted as a private concerned citizen (Watkins, 1990). The Mary Ellen case led to the 1874 creation of the Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children in New York (National Child Abuse and Neglect Training [NCANT], 2014). With the establishment of the Society for

Prevention of Cruelty to Children, non-governmental child protection agencies began to spread throughout the states (NCANT, 2014).

The Children's Bureau was established in 1912 and initiated federal attention to child protection and thereafter federal momentum broadened, including the need to develop a workforce trained to identify and support abused children. Through this momentum by 1922 over 300 non-governmental child protection agencies were created NCANT, 2014; Myers, 2008). However, many of these agencies closed or merged with other agencies between 1929 and 1940 during the Great Depression mainly due to their reliance on private funding (NCANT). In 1967 only 10 non-governmental child protection agencies were active (NCANT), and it was reported that no state had a system sufficient to respond to allegations of child abuse and neglect (NCANT; Myers, 2008).

In 1962, the publication of *The Battered Child Syndrome* by Dr. C. Henry Kempe's (Midgley & Livermore, 2009) and the Children's Bureau convening to address the call for action on child protection resulted in the emergence of child maltreatment as a social policy and practice concern. These key events heightened awareness to the insufficient response by the state and society to child maltreatment and contributed to the establishment of reporting laws in every state by 1967 (NCANT). In 1970, in response to the growing attention to the issue of child maltreatment and the declining number of non-governmental child protection agencies, the process for federal intervention through legislation began (NCANT).

The 1974 Child Abuse and Prevention Treatment Act (CAPTA) created federal leadership in the prevention and treatment of child abuse. In addition to identifying the need for a stable and capable child welfare workforce, CAPTA mandated that states both identify and provide treatment to abused and neglected children (Midgley & Livermore, 2009). The federal funds allocated through CAPTA allowed states to develop systems to respond to allegations of neglect, and physical and sexual abuse. CAPTA also allocated funds for research and training on child maltreatment (Myers, 2008). CAPTA focused initially on the mission of child safety without an adequate system in place to address well-being and permanency needs of the children who were removed from their homes. This focus led to systemic issues within the child welfare system, some of which still exist today. Through continuous reauthorization since 1974 CAPTA remains the core guidance for the authority of states to intervene on behalf of maltreated children (CAPTA reauthorization act of 2010).

Key child welfare policy. The systems set in place by CAPTA to respond to concerns of maltreated children resulted in an increase in the number of children being removed from their homes and an increase in the number of children in long-term foster care (Kernan & Lansford, 2004). Due to this increase federal policy was created to address both the number of children in care and the length of stay in out-of-home care. The Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) was the first responsive policy, followed by the Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act (AACWA)

The Indian Child Welfare Act was established in 1978 (ICWA) due to the high number of Native American children being removed from their homes and placed with non-native families (Myers, 2008). To reduce the number of inappropriate removals of Native American children from their homes, ICWA gave jurisdiction of abuse and neglect decisions regarding Native children to the tribal courts (Myers, 2008; Popple & Leighninger, 1999). The practices and policy established by ICWA remain in place today, however are not without controversy. For example, ICWA was formally contested in the 'Baby Veronica' Supreme Court ruling of 2013 (Adoptive Couple vs. Baby Girl, 2012).

In response to the growing number of children in long-term foster care the Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act (AACWA) was enacted in 1980. Provisions within AACWA required the child welfare workforce to make reasonable efforts to maintain children in their homes when possible, to safely reunite families, and to develop a permanency plan for each child in foster care (Kernan & Lansford, 2004; Myers, 2008; Phillips & Mann, 2013). AACWA emphasized family preservation, and provided financial support to adoptive parents (Kernan & Lansford, 2004; Myers 2008). Subsequent to the mandates established by AACWA there was an initial decrease in the number of children in foster care; however by 1996 the number drastically increased (Kernan & Lansford, 2004).

The drastic rise in the number of children in the foster care system between 1982 and 1996 occurred for several reasons. The primary reason is generally attributed to the

rise in crack cocaine use and the anti-drug abuse policies enacted in 1986 and 1988, which increased the number of mothers involved in the criminal justice and child welfare systems (Kernan & Lansford, 2004; Phillips & Mann, 2013). The 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act (PRWOA) also caused a continued increase in the number of children in care due to the decreased number of families eligible for welfare assistance (Lorkovich, Piccola, Groza, Brindo, & Marks, 2004). By 1996, 507,000 children were in foster care, with the record number of 567,000 children in care by 1999 (Stoltzfus, 2013).

AACWA ultimately failed to decrease the number of children in care and did not sufficiently address the need for timely permanency. Concern also existed that the emphasis on family preservation jeopardized children's safety (Phillips & Mann, 2013). For these reasons the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) passed with bipartisan support in 1997 (Phillips & Mann, 2013), and caused a pendulum swing in child welfare practice from AACWA's focus on family preservation and reunification towards removing unsafe children and expediting the timeframes for permanency (Kerman & Lasford, 2004). The responsibility to shift priorities landed on the child welfare workforce.

ASFA primarily focused on two objectives: child safety and ensuring children moved through the system to achieve permanence in a timely manner. ASFA prioritized reunifying children when safely possible (Gendell, 2001). The strategies put in place with ASFA resulted in a decrease in the number of children in care. However, children

continue to experience long stays in out-of-home care. In 2014, there were 415,129 children in foster care. Of these children, 107,918 were awaiting adoption (DHHS, 2015), a number more than double that of the average number of children adopted during a given year. In addition, since 2011, more children are entering foster care nationally than exiting (DHHS, 2015).

ASFA favored adoption as an alternative permanency plan when reunification was not feasible. Although adoption is supported by research findings, the law, and federal funding there is concern that it is not a one-size fits all solution for children in the foster care system. It may be that the adoption priority is impeding permanency outcomes for some children (Coutpet, 2005; Kernan & Lansford, 2004). Criticism of the adoption standard's implicit devaluation of guardianship has heightened since ASFA; however, it began prior to the passing of ASFA. For example, in 1980 Jones and Biesecker wrote: "Adoption has been highlighted as the answer for the child drifting in foster care. Many persons have erroneously come to equate permanency with adoption" (p. 484). ASFA created a universal approach to permanency; if the states want the much-needed financial incentives, then all children must fit into the framework of adoption (Coupet, 2005). However, with over 100,000 children in care awaiting permanency, adoption is not a reality for all children. In establishing adoption as the ideal form of permanency, ASFA has created a group of children who fail to fit into its mold (Kernan & Lansford, 2004).

ASFA has been called "a blatant attack against the poor" because of the incentives given for adoption, while no such incentives exist for reunification (Barth,

Wuczyn, & Crea, 2005, p. 377). The ASFA twelve-month timeframe to reunification caused concerns that reunification rates would suffer because one year is not adequate for families to receive and benefit from services, especially when addressing substance abuse issues (Barth, et al., 2005). There was also criticism that ASFA was an attempt to move children from one parent households to two-parent households. A similar criticism of the PRWOA act passed only a year earlier with the same emphasis on two-parent households (Barth, et al., 2005; Townsend, Hignight, & Rubovits, 2004).

Criticism was also raised regarding the systemic issues that ASFA failed to address. The lack of additional funding for the child welfare workforce and the unavailability of services were not resolved with ASFA, yet parents were expected to complete their case plans in record time (Gendell, 2001; Kernan & Lansford, 2004). Child welfare case workers, responsible for providing reunification services, remained overwhelmed as resources were not allocated within ASFA for more child welfare staff (Kernan & Lansford, 2004). ASFA also failed to address the structure of child welfare practice and did not provide for increased training or standards for child welfare workers (Lowry, 2004). Consequently, ASFA was enacted with no foundational support or structural change to the system.

Lastly, criticism focused on research related to ASFA outcomes. Outcome studies on the impact of ASFA are limited due to three main factors. First, states have not uniformly implemented ASFA; second, judges do not always rule in accordance with ASFA guidelines (Townsend et al., 2008); and third, sufficient pre-ASFA data is difficult

to obtain (Barth et al., 2005). The first two concerns create difficulty in the ability to attribute successes and failures to ASFA. For example, within the judicial system, delays occur due to continuance requests, case flow issues as a result of the court's schedule (Edwards, 2007), and compelling reasons per ASFA guidelines. Judge Edwards (2007), through a review of law, policy, and practice details the negative impacts that continuances can have on children achieving timely permanency outcomes. Criminal proceeding connected to the abuse or neglect can also delay the dependency process. The juvenile court may have to wait for the criminal courts decisions prior to moving forward with the dependency process (McSherry et al., 2006). The third issue reflects the inability to compare pre-and post-ASFA data. These concerns pose serious limitations to attributing results, positive or negative, directly to ASFA.

Today, CAPTA and ASFA along with the 2008 Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act are the regulatory policy and federal mandates that provide guidance to states and the child welfare workforce for child protection statues and policy. Each state is held accountable financially for meeting specific requirements outlined in each of the acts. A criticism of this current system is that the discretion allowed to each state causes inconsistent practices across the nation (Coupet, 2005). This historical review of the development of child welfare practice and policy leads to the discussion of the current state of child welfare system and its workforce.

The Current State of the Child Welfare System

Local and national news indicate that the current state of child welfare is stretched in every state (CWIG listserv, 2017). The media reports highlighting the plight of child welfare, such as increased severity of abuse, workforce issues, and child fatalities far outweigh media reporting of any positive aspects of the field. Unfortunately, the data does not contradict many of these negative views. For example, despite attempts to reduce the total number of children in care, there are approximately the same number of children in out of home care in 2014 as in 1990 (USDHHS, 1990; USDHHS, 2015).

Although there are currently same number of children in care as there were in 1990, the number of children in care has reduced by 130,000 since 1999, when the number of children in care was at its peak. Also, the amount of time children spend in care is less than in previous decades. In the past 10 years, children are spending, on average, 10 months fewer in out-of-home care (USDHHS, 2006; USDHHS, 2014).

To address systemic practice issues nationally, states are partnering with organizations such as the Annie E. Casey Foundation to transform the child welfare system and workforce. Initiatives such as Team Decision Making and Permanency Roundtables invoke the principles of family-centered practice. This shift, allowing families to become part of the decision-making process as their own experts is a trend spreading throughout child welfare and shows a transition from the authoritative child safety role of the child welfare system towards a more family-centered, collaborative role.

The current state of the child welfare system is complex. There are many strengths and positive initiatives that are taking shape, however, numerous challenges remain. In the past three years, there has been a steady increase in the number of children entering care in half of the states, resulting in an overall national increase in the number of children in care (DHHS 2004-2013, DHHS, 2015). Additionally, since 2009 the number of children exiting care annually has decreased (DHHS, 2015). There are currently almost 61,000 children whose parental rights have been terminated, yet are still awaiting adoption (DHHS, 2015). In addition, workforce concerns persist, and with an increase in the number of children in care and awaiting adoption, the pressures on the workforce are growing. Despite strategies to increase retention and strengthen the workforce, turnover continues at a high rate (American Public Human Services Association [APHSA], 2005). Child welfare workers express high levels of stress and burnout that ultimately impact the children and families they work with. The concern about how to strengthen the child welfare workforce to support children and families that was the impetus for this study.

The child welfare workforce is a topic of focus when examining the current state of the child welfare system. There is national attention paid to the need to strengthen, support, and retain the workforce through federally supported initiatives such as the National Child Welfare Workforce Institute (NCWWI). Of primary concern is the high turnover of frontline case workers, with a reported national average of 20% (APHSA, 2005), and as high as 90% in some areas (CWIG, Worker Turnover, n.d.). Research

addressing the reasons for the high turnover rate and strategies for retention of the child welfare workforce is extensive (e.g. Chen & Scannapieco, 2009; DePanfilis & Zlotnik, 2007; Ellett, 2008; Lizano & Mor Barak, 2011; McCrae, Scannapieco, & Obermann, 2015; Middleton & Potter, 2015; Potter, Comstock, Brittain, & Hanna, 2009; Shim, 2010; Smith, 2004; Strand & Morrison Dore, 2008; and Zeitlin, Augsberger, Auerbach, & McGowan, 2014). The high turnover rate is not only costly due to the investment in hiring and training child welfare workers (APHSA. 2005), it is also linked to negative outcomes for children and families (Williams & Glisson, 2013).

One of these potential impacts of concern is that children are lingering in their non-permanent placements for longer than federal mandates instruct, and that the length of time children are staying in out-of-home care may be detrimental to their well-being (Becker, Jordan & Larson., 2007; Lawrence, Carlson, & Egeland, 2006; Lloyd & Barth, 2011; McSherry et al., 2006; Tilbury & Osmond, 2006). The mission of child welfare is to protect children, and to keep children safe they must at times be removed from their homes. Ensuring the well-being of children in out-of-home care is a primary objective of the child welfare system, however the balancing act between permanency and well-being is challenging for child welfare workers (Berger, Bruch, Johnson, James, & Rubin, 2009; Doyle, 2007; Rubin, O'Reilly, Luan, & Localio, 2007).

The Data

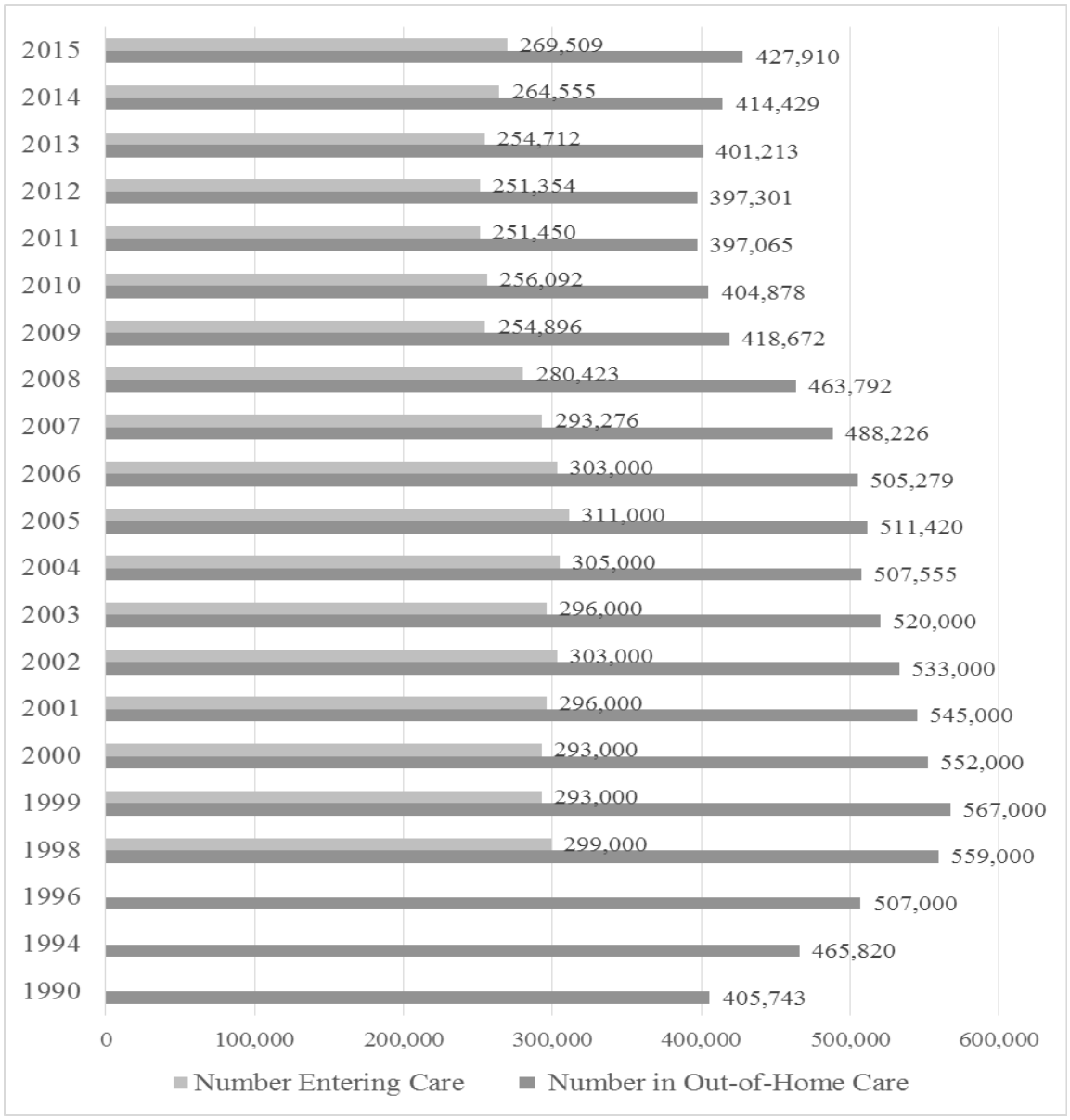
The mandate put forth in ASFA requiring states to record and submit key data points allows for a tracking of trends in out-of-home care since 1997 through the

Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS). The data available in the AFCARS has created a greater ability to understand the functioning of the child welfare system, however the data are not without limitations. AFCARS data requires that the front-line child welfare worker correctly input information into the state database system and thus the ability to account for errors in the data input is limited. For example, the worker may be delayed in updating the case plan goal, or have had to guess at the child's race/ethnicity due to incomplete information available. Despite the limitations, AFCARS data revolutionized the consistency and availability of child welfare data. Prior to 1997 there exist a few scattered statistics that are challenging to find and inconsistent. Included in the following section are select data that I was able to compile pre-1997, however the bulk of the data presented is post ASFA-1997. To provide an understanding of the number of children placed in out-of-home care that the child welfare workforce is responsible for, the following statistics are presented: the total number of children in care nationally; the number of children achieving permanency; and the average length of stay in out-of-home care.

The total number of children in out-of-home care indicate struggles to move children through the system in a timely manner. The continued increase of children entering care demonstrates the burden placed on the already overwhelmed system. Figures 1 through 3 show the trends in out-of-home care nationally since 1990. National data was collected through a review of AFCARS reports.

The number of children in out-of-home care has increased annually since 2011 (Figure 1). Prior to 2011 there had been a steady decline of the total number of children in out-of-home care since 1999. Between 2012 and 2014 the number of children in out-of-home care increased by almost 18,000 children, representing a 4% rise (USDHHS 2015). The steady increase of children coming into care between 2011 and 2013 is reflected in about half of the states; the other half of the states showing either a small decrease or a steady rate of children in care (USDHHS 2004-2013, 2014). Of those states with a growth in the number of children in care, Arizona, Montana, and Oklahoma have experienced the highest increases, with each state having about 20% more children in care in 2013 than in 2011 (USDHHS 2004-2013, 2014).

Figure 1. Number of children entering and in out-of-home care in U.S.

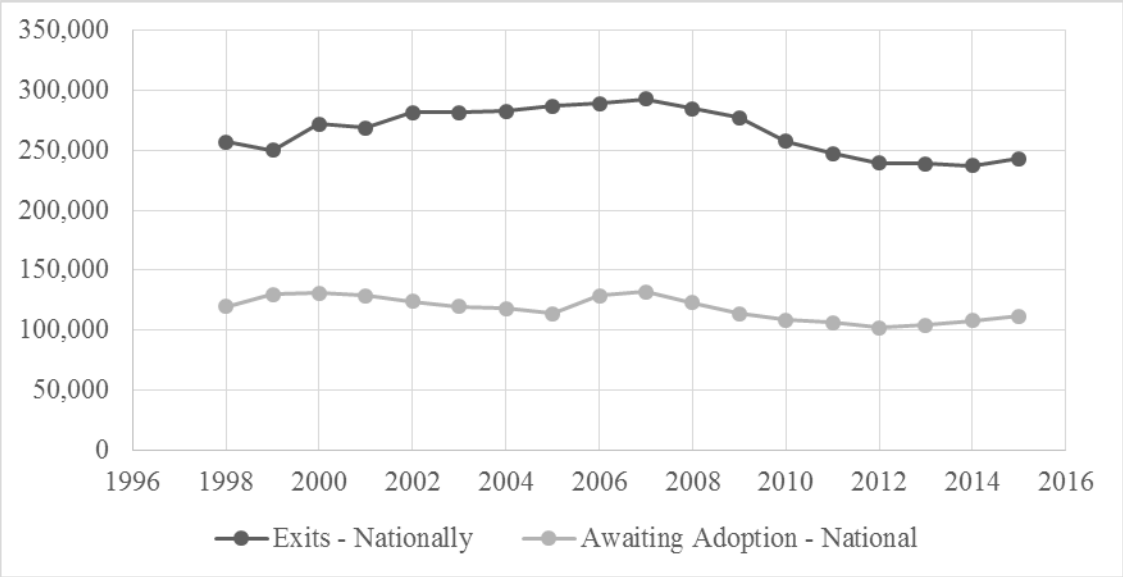


(USDHHS 2004-2013, 2014, 2015, 2016)

Figure 2 represents data gathered from AFCAR reports 10-22 (AFCAR report 12 represents the years 1998-2002) showing the number of children who exited care annually each year and the number of children awaiting adoption each year. The number

of children exiting out-of-home care steadily decreased from 2007 until the 2015. The number of children awaiting adoption also has been slightly increasing since 2012 (DHHS 2016).

Figure 2. Number of children exiting and awaiting adoption in the U.S.

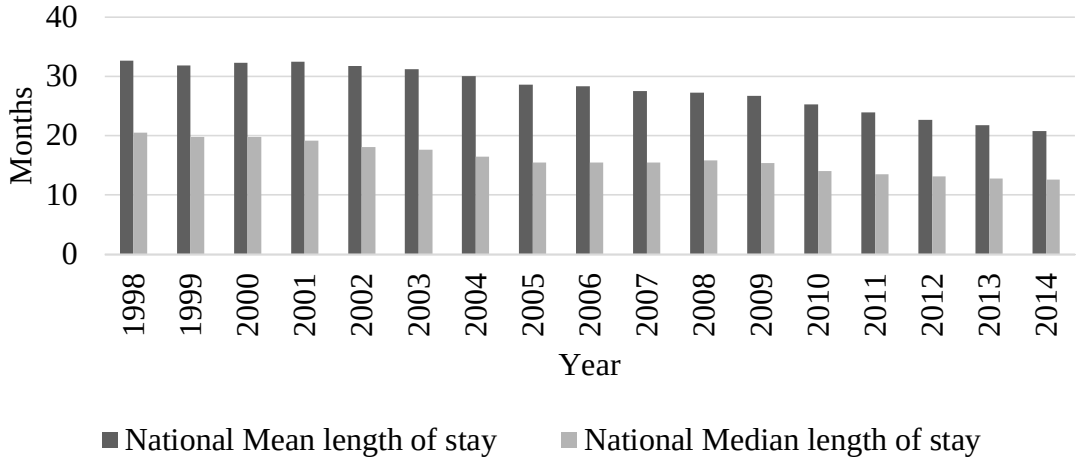


AFCAR reports 10-22 (AFCAR report 12 represents the years 1998-2002

Figure 3 displays the steady decrease nationally of time spent in care from 1998 to 2014 (AFCARS data 10-22). The difference between the mean and the median lines portray the data that indicate a high percentage of children tend to exit care within six months (28% in 2014), yet over half of the children in care spend over 12 months out-of-home (USDHHS, AFCARS 22, 2014). Although there is an overall decrease in time children spend in out-of-home care, the most recent AFCARS report presents statistics that indicate timely permanency is not occurring for most children in care. For example, over half of the children awaiting adoption have been in care over two years, which is

longer than the ASFA federal target; 38% of children who exited care during 2013 spent over 18 months out-of-home, and 27% spent at least two years in care (USDHHS, AFCARS 21, 2014).

Figure 3. Length of Stay in Out-of-Home Care



AFCARS 10-22; USDHHS 2004-2014

This review of the child welfare system, has unfolded through a look at the historical evolution and the current state of child welfare along with an account of contextual statistics. ASFA provides for federal mandates towards ensuring the safety, permanency, and well-being of children. The data indicate that efforts to achieve ASFA guidelines are needed, including an urgent need for strategies to reduce the number of children in out-of-home care and to improve permanency outcomes for children. The research on the child welfare workforce establishes the need to continue to uncover strategies to strengthen and support the workforce. This study examines first, the association between individual-level factors of child welfare workers and perceptions of

organizational culture and climate, and second, the relationship between organizational factors and permanency outcomes for children.

Statement of the Problem

The child welfare workforce is charged with ensuring the safety and well-being of maltreated children while striving to achieve timely permanency for children who are removed from their homes. The demands of the job can lead to burnout (Anderson, 2000; Lizano & Mor Barak, 2011), high levels of stress (Travis, Lizano, & Mor Barak, 2016), and subject workers to vicarious trauma (Jankoski, 2010). Uncovering strategies to improve, for example, coping skills (Anderson, 2000), increase job satisfaction (Strand & Morrison Dore, 2008), and self-efficacy (Camargo & Royse, 2010; Ellett, 2008) have been explored as potential ways to support child workers on an individual level. Supervision has also been found essential to supporting, strengthening, and retaining the workforce (e.g. Chen & Scannapieco, 2009; Lietz & Julien-Chinn, 2017; Mor Barak, Travis, Pyun, Xie, 2009; Smith, 2004; Zinn, 2014).

On an organizational level there is evidence that the organizational culture and climate impact both the workforce and direct client outcomes. The culture and climate of an organization can support or encumber an individual worker, and can impact how services are provided. Although there is a good amount of organizational culture and climate research, two gaps in the research have been identified. The first gap relates to the question of how certain individual level factors may impact one's perception of their organizational culture and climate; and second has to do with the relationship between

organizational culture and climate and permanency outcomes for children involved in the child welfare system.

Within child welfare systems, organizational factors encompassing culture, climate, and individual-level factors have been linked to improved service provisions for maltreated children (Glisson & Green, 2011). These findings are hopeful and provide evidence that organizational factors are directly related to client outcomes, including timely permanency. I had originally planned to explore this area in this study, however as I explain in a later section, limitations prevented analyzing the time-to-permanency data. Therefore, the literature review section is limited to a discussion regarding the child welfare workforce including organizational culture and climate.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This review of the literature describes the main concepts in the study and the theoretical basis for the study. First, the link between the importance of organizational factors and child welfare outcomes is explored. Although this study was not able to draw conclusions from the data on this research question, it is imperative to understand this link and its connection to supporting and strengthening the child welfare workforce. Second, the constructs of organizational culture, climate, and individual worker factors are defined and are described in conjunction with the impact on the front- line worker. Included is a discussion regarding discrepancies and limitations identified in the related literature. Finally, ecological systems theory is presented and described as the theoretical framework for the study.

Organizational Factors and Child Welfare Outcomes

The role of both the individual caseworker and the organization as a whole have been found to impact outcomes for children, youth, and families, specifically with regard to permanency. Children with caseworkers who are strongly engaged in their case are more likely to achieve permanency either through adoption or reunification (Cheng, 2010). Cheng (2010) demonstrated that children served by caseworkers who engaged parents in the case had enhanced reunification and adoption outcomes. Caseworker turnover (Cushing & Greenblatt, 2009; Osmond & Tilbury, 2012) and overwhelming workloads (McSherry, et al., 2006) are have been found to be negatively associated with

timely permanency outcomes. Osmond and Tilbury (2012) found in their semi-structured interviews of foster parents, birth parents, and child welfare workers that the stability of the child welfare workforce was essential to effective permanency planning. Foster parents reported that when the worker changed, either the permanency plan changed, or the new worker did not feel competent to make permanency decisions, and the permanency planning was delayed (Osmond & Tilbury, 2012). In contrast, increased skills and stability of the child welfare workforce were shown to be central to improved permanency outcomes (Lowry, 2004; Osmond & Tilbury, 2012). In addition, a case manager's belief that a child is adoptable is found to influence the likelihood of a child achieving permanency through adoption (O'Brien, Davis, Morgan, Rogg, & Houston., 2012).

Research has also linked organizational factors to child welfare outcomes in addition to permanency. This section presents studies that focus on the relationship between organizational factors and child welfare outcomes. First, two qualitative studies are examined, followed by quantitative studies, as are outlined in Table 1. This research provides a foundation for understanding how organizational level factors and individual case work may impact direct client outcomes in a child welfare setting.

Qualitative Studies. The qualitative studies that explore organizational variables in relation to child welfare practice and client outcomes provide for an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon. First, in a mixed-methods design, using grounded theory methods and the ecological theory to illustrate organizational characteristics, Yoo

(2000) explores leadership, job satisfaction, and workplace support in relation to client outcomes. The key finding from the in-depth interviews was the relationship between protective factors and workers ability to better cope with agency stressors.

Yoo (2000) found that the relationship between organizational characteristics and client outcomes is complex and can be mitigated by individual worker characteristics such as commitment and support. Workers who were committed to the families and the philosophy of family preservation and had support from their supervisors were able to buffer the stress they felt from organizational issues. Yoo (2000) illustrates the case manager as the in-between between organizational conditions and client outcomes, with agency culture buffering the relationship.

The second qualitative study examined in this section uses Lipsky's street level bureaucracy theory (Smith & Donovan, 2003). This theory considers how bureaucratic conditions impact direct practice and examines how the pressures of the bureaucracy impact front-line work. The authors present their exploratory study describing caseworkers' everyday work through interviews and observations, and conclude that organizational pressures set case worker priorities resulting in a de-prioritization of family engagement and best practice to prioritizing completing required tasks by at time cutting corners. Smith and Donovan (2003) identify the culture of fear and mistrust that impacts decision making. Although Yoo (2000) and Smith and Donovan (2003) use different language describing culture and climate, the concepts are very similar, and the findings are reflective of the quantitative work on the topic.

Quantitative studies. Dr. Charles Glisson has done extensive work examining the relationship between client outcomes and organizational factors, primarily using the Organizational Social Context (OSC) measurement tool. There also exists a body of research studying how organizational factors influence job satisfaction and retention in child welfare. I discuss this research in a later section of this dissertation (For example: Ellett, 2009; Shim 2010).

Youth outcomes. One of the earlier child welfare studies by Glisson (Glisson & Hemmelgarn, 1998) found support through a quasi-experimental longitudinal design that children served in child welfare offices with positive climates experienced greater improvements in psychosocial functioning. In addition, they found that that effectiveness of service is related to organizational climate (Glisson & Hemmelgarn, 1998). Although the language Glisson uses to describe climates has changed subsequent to his 1998 study with Hemmelgarn, the findings have remained consistent. For example, in their 2011 study, Glisson and Green found through Hierarchical Linear Model Analysis that children served in agencies with engaged climates experienced greater improvements in their behavior outcomes. The authors reported an effect size of approximately one standard deviation, indicating that the difference in behavior scores between least-engaged and most-engaged climates was over 11 points (Glisson & Green, 2011). This study utilized data from the National Survey of Child and Adolescent Well-being (NSCAW), with a sample size of over 1,600 participants.

Findings consistent with these conclusions appear in Williams and Glisson's October 2013 study that also used NSCAW data, with a sample size of 5,872 youth involved in the child welfare system. The intention of this study was to test the Organizational Culture and Climate theory (OCC) put forth by the authors. The findings statistically confirmed, first that there is a relationship between culture and climate, and, second, that climate is significantly associated with youth outcomes. The authors indicate that youth served in organizations with proficient cultures and engaged and functional climates are more likely to have enhanced outcomes than youth served in resistant cultures and stressed climates (Williams & Glisson, Oct. 2013).

The final study reviewed by Glisson and colleagues combines the study of turnover and youth outcomes in relation to organizational culture. Williams and Glisson (Sept. 2013) examined the interaction between turnover, proficient organizational culture, and youth outcomes. Using NSCAW II longitudinal data, the sample included 2346 youth who had received services from 1544 child welfare workers in 73 child welfare agencies. The authors found a significant interaction between the variables, indicating that decreased turnover is associated with improved youth outcomes in agencies with proficient cultures. Proficient organizational cultures were identified as those agencies that expected case workers to have current knowledge and skills and prioritize youth well-being (Williams & Glisson, Sept. 2013).

In a study by Silver Wolf, Dulmus, Maguin, and Cristalli (2013), using the OSC, the authors present contrasting findings to those listed above. The authors utilized

secondary OSC data from a 2009 survey of child and family human service workers to compare with discharge and treatment success outcomes from 55 separate programs serving children involved in such systems as child welfare and juvenile justice. The discharge outcomes were measured as exiting to a lower level of care, or exiting to a higher level of care. The authors found that the programs who scored higher on rigidity, resistance, and stress were associated with higher rates of discharging clients to lower levels of care, deducing that "the programs with less favorable cultures and climates had better outcomes as assessed by care level at discharge" (Silver Wolf et al., 2013, p. 10). The authors reported similar findings for treatment success. These findings highlight the need for additional research that assesses the link between direct client outcomes and organizational culture and climate. It should be noted that this study was published as a faculty publication.

Parsing out these contradictory findings proves challenging. The vast majority of the OSC studies have been conducted by the same research team, and many of the studies use the same data set. It is possible that Silver Wolf et al. (2013) identified a gap in the research design, the measurement, or perhaps had a sample that was different from that studied previously. The main take-away from this contradiction is the need to expand this line of research on different child welfare populations, testing different outcomes, utilizing different measurement tools and research designs - including qualitative research, and using different data sets to determine if the findings are replicable.

Summary of the findings. In summary, the climate of an organization has been linked to both individual outcomes and overall organizational outcomes (Schneider, Ehrhart & Macey, 2011). For example, children served in agencies with positive climates have been found to have significantly greater psychosocial functioning (Glisson & Hemmelgarn, 1998). In addition, children served in child welfare systems with more engaged climates have been found to experience more positive long-term outcomes than those served in poor climates (Glisson & Green, 2011). However, as seen in the Silver Wolf (2013) study, there are contradictory findings.

Organizational climate has also been found to impact individual workers. For example, poor climates have been found to increase job related stress, turnover and depersonalization of case workers (Glisson & Green, 2011), are a significant predictor of a child welfare workers' intention to leave the agency (Shim, 2010). Glisson and Green (2011) stress the need to improve climates, and thus client outcomes through organizational level strategies.

Positive work cultures are found to positively affect organizational functioning, whereas negative work cultures can result in poor practices (Wilderom, 2011). For example, in organizations with positive cultures, workers are more likely to have positive attitudes towards implementing evidence-based practices (Aarons & Sawitzky, 2006). Rigid cultures are associated with lower worker morale in the child welfare workforce (Glisson, Green, & Williams, 2012) and proficient cultures are positively associated with increased case worker retention (Williams & Glisson, Sept. 2013). In addition, proficient

cultures - organizational cultures that set expectations for competency, up-to-date knowledge and a focus on client well-being - are linked to enhanced outcomes for children in the child welfare system (Williams & Glisson, Sept. 2013; Williams & Glisson, Oct. 2013). The findings support the postulate that organizational culture is associated with the overall effectiveness of an organization (Hartnell et al., 2011).

Although organizational and individual-level factors have been linked to direct client outcomes in the emerging research, there are limitations. These limitations include use of the same data set, use of the same measurement tool, and that the bulk of the findings are by the same research team. Additionally, qualitative methods are sparse despite recommendations that culture be studied through a qualitative lens. However, connecting organizational factors to direct client outcomes is a new and emerging line of research and a focus on organizational factors may be an untapped resource to improve outcomes for children in out-of-home care.

Table 1

Organizational Factors and Child Welfare Outcomes

Article (Author and Title)	Sample	Research Design	Data Analysis Plan
Aarons & Sawitzky (2006).	*N* = 301 Clinical and case management mental health providers in San Diego (non-random)	Cross-sectional, in-person quantitative surveys.	Pearson product-moment correlation analysis. Regression Analysis Multilevel HLM Analyses.
Glisson & Green (2006).	First Level: Baseline: *N*=733 children Follow-up: N=588 Second Level N=15 case management units (Child Welfare and Juvenile justice) (non-random)	Longitudinal non-experimental design with two levels of sampling units. In-person quantitative surveys.	HLM Analysis.
Glisson & Green (2011).	NSCAW data (all 5 waves). *N*=1696 child welfare caseworkers *N*=1640 children who were subjects of substantiated child abuse or neglect reports (non-random)	Child Outcomes: Longitudinal quantitative data Organizational Climate & Child Welfare Services: Cross-sectional survey data.	Random Effects Models. HLM Analysis.

Table 1 (Continued)

Green, Albanese, Shapiro, & Aarons (2014).	*N*=322 clinical and case management service providers (non-random)	Cross-sectional survey design	Multilevel regression analysis.
Silver Wolf, Dulmus, Maguin, & Cristalli (2013).	*N*=1,273 child and family human service workers	Cross-Sectional survey data (OSC) and discharge data from 2,043 clients	Descriptive statistics and regression analysis
Shim, M. (2010).	*N*=766 case workers and supervisors	Secondary Data from the New York State Social Work Education Consortium	Logistic Regression Model

Organizational Factors in Child Welfare Systems

This section defines the constructs of organizational culture, climate, and individual worker factors in child welfare settings. I describe how organizational culture was operationalized for this study through team cohesion and learning culture. Additionally, I explain how organizational climate was operationalized using the Parker Climate scale and leadership. Finally, described are the individual factors of job satisfaction, coping strategies, self-efficacy, job stress, burnout, and individual affect.

Organizational Culture: A Definition

The study of organizational culture has its roots in the field of anthropology, through it has also been influenced by the disciplines of sociology and social psychology (Hartnell et al., 2011). The theory of organizational culture is based on the premise that organizations are essentially mini societies and thus have individual cultural characteristics inclusive of values, norms, rules, and expectations (Allaire & Firsirotu,

1984). As anthropologists are able to learn to understand the working of a racial or ethnic culture to which they do not belong, specialists in organizational culture can use research to understand different organizational cultures. The knowledge gained through becoming competent in an organization's culture allows for an understanding of the functioning of that organization (Allaire & Firsirotu, 1984).

The multiple definitions of organizational culture outlined in Table 1 illustrate that although there is not a single agreed upon definition, the idea of a shared meaning of symbols, language, and ideology theorized Pettigrew in 1979 is a consistent thread in each definition. Organizational culture is essentially an overarching set of assumptions, beliefs, norms, and collectively held values that are conveyed to each member of the organization (Ellet, 2008; Glisson, 2002; Hartnell, et al., 2011). Methods of conveyance occur through teaching (Denison, 1996), language, ritual, myth (Pettigrew, 1979), and symbolism (Alvesson, 2011; Pettigrew, 1979). The culture of an organization shapes behavioral expectations (Aarons & Sawitzky, 2006; Ellet 2008; Hartnell et al., 2011) and guides how work is completed in a given organization (Glisson, 2002). The culture of an organization is created through group learning, problem solving, and adaptation, that once considered effective, is passed to new members of the organization (Schein, 1985 as cited in Denison, 1996).

Organizational culture and climate researcher Charles Glisson operationalized organizational culture as the shared normative beliefs and behavioral expectations that describe how things are done in an organization. Glisson further identified that the culture

of an organization can be either proficient, rigid, or resistant (University of Tennessee Children's Mental Health Research Center [UTCMHRC], 2006; Williams & Glisson, 2013). Proficient cultures are found in organizations that emphasize client well-being, that are staffed by competent and responsive service providers, and value up-to-date knowledge. In rigid cultures employees have limited input and restricted flexibility. They are confined by bureaucratic rules and regulations (UTCMHRC, 2006). Employees in resistant cultures demonstrate minimal interest in change or innovative solutions (UTCMHRC, 2006).

Essentially, the culture of an organization provides the historical blueprint for the organizations functioning on a macro level and guides how work is completed without the need for individual interpretation. In this study I used two measures to examine this the question of how work is done in an organization at the macro level. First, the organization's learning culture describes the shared vision created by leadership that involves vision, support, encouraging ongoing growth, and a proactive approach to learning and visioning (Senge, 1990). Learning organizations are described as organizations that continuously promote both learning and change (Marshall Egan, Yang, & Bartlett, 2004). The COHA examines the learning culture of an organization through how learning activities are promoted and the extent to which child welfare staff engage in those learning activities.

Second, I operationalized organizational culture in this study through the concept of team cohesion. Yoo (2008) identified team work along with effective team cohesion in

the meso level functioning of an agency, and co-worker support as a frequently occurring theme. Within the COHA, team cohesion looks at the values of the team, the expectations of how the team functions that are communicated both overtly and covertly. Therefore, in this study, the culture of the child welfare agency was examined on a macro level through learning culture, and the meso level through team cohesion.

Table 2

Definitions of Organizational Culture

Author	Definition of Organizational Culture
Ellet (2008)	"…organizational culture has been defined as a set of shared, latent assumptions, beliefs, values and norms that influence the espoused values, attitudes, and behaviors of organizational members…" (p. 80).
Glisson (2002)	"…normative beliefs and shared behavioral expectations in an organization or work unit…These beliefs and expectations guide the way work is approached and socialize new employees in the priorities of the organization" (p. 235).
Hartnell, Yi Ou, & Kinicki (2011)	The culture of an organization provides an understanding of values, beliefs and norms that guide expectations.
Hofstede (1980/1981)	"My personal definition is that culture is the collective programming of the human mind that distinguishes the members of one human group from those of another. Culture, in this sense, is a system of collectively held values" (p. 24).
Pettigrew (1979)	"Culture is a system of such publicly and collectively accepted meanings operating for a given group at a given time…the offsprings of the concept of culture…are symbol, language, ritual, and myth" (p. 2).
Schein (1985) as cited in Denison (1996)	"'a pattern of shared basic assumptions that the group learned as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to think, and feel in relation to those problems'" (p. 626).
Shim (2010)	"Organizational culture, which is defined as the way things are done in an organization, shapes employees behavioral expectations and norms" (p. 848).

Organizational Climate: A Definition

Reviewing the organizational climate literature, I found that climate is often defined in relation to what it is not, i.e., it is not culture and it is not job satisfaction. Denison (1996) provides examples of areas where culture and climate converge such as the idea of a shared sense of an organization and the overlap in how culture and climate are studied. However, Denison also finds that the difference between the two concepts can be traced to the respective underlying theoretical bases. The theory of climate is attributed to Lewinian Field Theory (Denison, 1996), based off gestalt theorist Kurt Lewin's (Slife & Williams, 1995), idea that behavior is caused by the interaction between the individual and the environment (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The theory of culture rather has roots in symbolic interaction and social construction (Denison, 1996). Denison (1996) distinguishes the concepts of culture and climate further in referring to climate as a situation that is linked to individual thoughts, feelings, and behaviors whereas culture is a context that has evolved over time, with historical roots and collectively held values, beliefs, and assumptions.

Providing a visual distinction between culture and climate, Härtel and Ashkanasy (2011) offer a metaphor. The authors relate organizational culture to a fossil. A fossilized organization can be analyzed to discover its earliest beginnings and the foundation upon which the organization was built. Using the metaphor, organizational climate is referred to as the agreed upon interpretation of the fossil record. The culture of an organization persists throughout time, but the climate is dependent on perceptions and interpretations

and is thus more fluid. This metaphoric definition places a strong emphasis on the role of interpretation within an organization's climate. This is seen throughout the listed definitions in Table 3, where the word perception is often used.

Organizational climate, like culture, represents a shared understanding (Bednar, 2003). However unlike organizational culture, climate includes the elements of consciousness, interpretation (Härtel & Ashkanasy, 2011), and perception (Aarons & Sawitzky, 2006). A consciously shared perception of an organization elicits emotional responses (Aarons & Sawitzky, 2006). The role of both emotion and interpretation subsequently effect the implementation of policies and practices (Gibbs & Cooper, 2011), and the way a group describes its work environment (Härtel & Ashkanasy, 2011). In addition, individual perceptions lead to psychological climate and job satisfaction. Thus, a culture guides how the work is completed and how the work environment is constructed, and the climate is how the group feels about their work and their environment.

The distinction between culture and climate is necessary due to the casual use of the two terms and the lack of differentiation that frequently occurs. The literature provides support for the idea that, when defined clearly, the two concepts are distinct and can be measured by means of unique variables. The concepts that appear more difficult to differentiate are job satisfaction and psychological climate (Schneider et al., 2011). The argument exists that job satisfaction and climate, specifically psychological climate are so correlated that they are basically the same concept. Schneider et al. (2011) raise concern

that study of psychological climate has limited implications because of the difficulty to separate the results from job satisfaction and thus know where to make necessary changes. The authors recommend that climate should be measured on the aggregate level through organizational climate rather than the individual level of psychological climate (Schneider et al., 2011).

In child welfare research, Glisson has developed an operationalized definition of climate borrowing from both organizational and psychological climate definitions (Glisson, 2002). Psychological climate is defined by Glisson as an individual perception of the psychological impact of a work environment (Glisson, 2007). Organizational climate is defined as shared perceptions of the work environment (Glisson, 2007). The defining characteristics measuring climate are personal accomplishment, depersonalization, emotional exhaustion, role conflict, and role overload (Glisson, 2007). Glisson finds that agencies have one of three types of climates: engaged climates, functional climates, and stressful climates (Glisson, 2007).

In this study, I operationalized climate in terms of leadership and by means of the Parker Climate scale. Leadership is identified as an essential component to the child welfare workforce (Silver Wolf, et al., 2014). Yoo (2008) describes that leaders function at both the meso and macro levels and are responsible for identifying and bridging gaps to improve the functioning of the agency. In addition, Yoo (2008) found that participants expressed dissatisfaction and feeling their work environment was chaotic when leaders were perceived to not effectively perform their roles. In this study, I used the concept of

leadership to “capture staff views of the extent of distributive and adaptive leadership in the organization” (McCrae et al., 2014, p. 30-31). In other words, I am examining how leadership manages to bridge and build the exo-level functioning of the child welfare agency.

Table 3

Definitions of Organizational Climate

Author	Definition of Organizational Climate
Aarons & Sawitzky (2006)	"…workers' perceptions of, and emotional responses to, the characteristics of their work environment" (p. 62). – Based off Glisson
Ashkanasy et al. (2000)	"Configurations of attitudes and perceptions by organization members that, in combination, reflect a substantial part of the context of which they are a part and within which they work" (p.4).
Bednar (2003)	"…attitudes which employees collectively hold about their work environment" (p. 7).
Gibbs & Cooper (2011)	"…organizational climate refers to the collective or shared perceptions of employees toward their organization…the shared perceptions of the various policies, procedures, and practices that occur both formally and informally within an organization" (p. 120).
Glisson (2002)	"Psychological climate is the individual's perception of the psychological impact of the work environment on his or her own well-being" (p. 235). – Based off James and James 1989. Organizational climate is: "When workers in the same organizational unit agree on their perceptions, their shared perceptions can be aggregated to describe organizational climate" (p. 235). – Based off Jones & James, 1979 and Joyce & Slocum, 1984
Härtel & Ashkanasy (2011)	"Organizational climate refers to the collective conscious perceptions and descriptions employees have of their work environment" (p. 86).

Individual-Level Worker Factors

Individual worker factors within child welfare settings are difficult to concisely define as they vary in the literature. Demographic characteristics in child welfare organizational studies include factors such as educational background, age, marital status (DePanfilis & Zlotnic, 2008), salary and benefits (Strand & Dore, 2009), and years of service (Julien-Chinn & Lietz, 2016) among others. The constructs of individual affect (Straw & Barsade, 1993), self-efficacy (Collins-Camargo & Royse, 2010; Ellett, 2008), job satisfaction (Barth, Lloyd, Christ, Chapman, & Dickinson, 2008; Chen & Scannapieco, 2010; Strand & Dore, 2009), coping skills (Anderson, 2000), commitment to an organization (Glisson & Durick, 1988), job stress (Lizano & Mor Barak, 2012; Travis et al., 2016), and burnout (Anderson, 2000; Travis et al., 2016) are found in organizational research, including child welfare research and are the constructs measured in this study.

Job satisfaction. Locke (1976) provides what has been termed the most-used definition of job satisfaction as "a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences" (as cited in Saari & Judge, 2004, p. 396). In social services research, Glisson and Durick (1988) expand upon Locke's definition to include that one's reaction or response to specific job tasks influences one's level of job satisfaction. The negative effect of role ambiguity and the positive effect of skill variety were the key variables identified as strong predictors of job satisfaction by Glisson and Durick (1988).

In child welfare research, job satisfaction is a frequently studied concept in its relation to retention of the child welfare workforce (Chen & Scannapieco, 2009; DePanfilis & Zlotnik, 2008; McCrae, Scannapieco, Obermann, 2015; Smith, 2004; Strand & Dore, 2008; Yankeelov, Barbee, Sullivan, & Antle, 2008). For example, Chen and Scannapieco (2010) found that job satisfaction was one of the key variables that was associated with worker retention. In addition, using scales from the Comprehensive Organizational Health Assessment (COHA), McCrae et al. (2015) studied job satisfaction among child welfare supervisors and found support for the earlier findings in that child welfare supervisors who reported higher levels of job satisfaction reported lower levels of intent to leave the agency.

Barth et al. (2008) examined which factors in the child welfare organization predicted increased levels of satisfaction. The study found that child welfare workers who had social work degrees and who worked in urban areas were more likely to be satisfied with their child welfare jobs, and that the strongest predictor of job satisfaction was quality of supervision (Barth et al., 2008). In relation to retention, the study similarly found that child welfare workers who reported higher levels of job satisfaction were more likely stay in their position.

Self-Efficacy. The perception of self-efficacy, according to the predominant researcher on the topic, Bandura, is the degree to which one believes one can perform a skill or task given a set of conditions (1997). Self-efficacy is thus not the measure of the actual ability, rather the belief of having an ability (Bandura, 1997). The degree to which

an individual attributes their success to their own ability rather than by chance or because of an outside influence impacts the level of self-efficacy (Sherer, et al., 1982). This concept, referred to as performance accomplishment, is one of the four sources of information individuals use to base their personal efficacy on (Bandura, 1977).

Bandura (1977) theorized that once efficacy is established in one situation, individuals can transfer that sense of accomplishment to other situations. Vicarious experience, or witnessing others model successfully how to perform a task or skill, is the second source of information one utilizes to build a sense of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977). The third source of information is verbal persuasion, in that through suggestions of success, one begins to believe that they can be successful at the task at hand (Bandura, 1977). The last source of information is emotional arousal. Bandura (1977) postulated that an individual is more likely to expect success if they are in a calm environment, without fear or excess stress.

These sources of information provide implications for child welfare work. First, child welfare workers need to be able to attribute their successful experiences to their own work in order to have a stronger belief in self-efficacy (Sherer et al., 1982). Second, workers sense of self-efficacy will benefit from witnessing modeling of successful practice by mentors, trainers, and supervisors. Third, workers need to be encouraged to believe that they are capable of performing the job tasks. Fourth, the work environment should be one that is supportive and conducive to learning.

Within the child welfare workforce, self-efficacy has been linked to human caring (Ellett, 2008), retention (Chen & Scannapieco, 2010, DePanfilis & Zlotnik, 2008; Ellett, 2008), job satisfaction (Chen & Scannapieco, 2010), and decision making surrounding permanency outcomes (Julien-Chinn & Lietz, 2016). The importance of having a strong sense of self-efficacy in child welfare work is eloquently stated by Dr. Ellett (2008):

> The child welfare work context is arguably the most difficult in social work. Thus…those with strong self-efficacy beliefs in their capabilities to accomplish child welfare outcomes with children and families will demonstrate persistence in their efforts and resilience in overcoming the many obstacles, barriers, and at times, the many frustrations and confusions associate with child welfare work… (p. 80).

Ellett (2008) highlights that workers with a strong sense of self-efficacy are likely to have more success in the work they do with the families and children than are the workers with a weaker sense of self-efficacy.

Job Stress. The stress of child welfare work is multifaceted and is attributed to a variety factors such as: role conflict; role ambiguity (DePanfilis & Zlotnik, 2008; Lizano & Mor Barak, 2012; Travis, Lizano, & Mor Barak, 2016); role overload (Boyas et al., 2012); performing several roles with multiple and at times unreasonable expectations (Thompson, Wojciak, & Cooley, 2015); job demand (Kim & Kao, 2014); and job difficulty such as concern for personal safety, lack of support, and workload (Strand & Dore, 2008). Job stress within child welfare work is linked in the literature to intent to

leave (Boyas, et al., 2012; McCrae, Scannapieco, Obermann, 2005; DePanfilis & Zlotnick, 2008) and to increased levels of emotional exhaustion – a measure of burnout (Lizano & Mor Barak, 2012; Potter, Comstock, Brittain & Hanna, 2009; Travis, et al., 2016).

Burnout. Burnout has been defined as "a state of physical, emotional and mental exhaustion that results from long-term involvement in work situations that are emotionally demanding" (Schaufeli & Greenglass, 2001, p. 501). A key feature of the concept of burnout is attributing the exhaustion, or fatigue, to a specific domain (Kristensen, Borritz, Villadsen, & Christensen, 2005). Kristensen et al. (2005) expanded the study of burnout from previous research that focused on the domain of work situations to include personal and client related domains in the definition utilized for the Copenhagen Burnout Inventory (CBI). In the CBI personal burnout is defined as "the degree of physical and psychological fatigue and exhaustion experience by the person" and allows for the comparison of individuals across occupations (Kristensen et al., 2005, p. 197). Client-related burnout examines the physical and psychological fatigue and exhaustion experienced in relation to work with clients and work-related burnout in relation to work (Kristensen et al., 2005).

In burnout research specific to the child welfare workforce, Lizano and Mor Barak (2012) found that the workplace demands predicted burnout among a sample of child welfare workers. Similarly, job stress was found in the study by Boyas, Wind, and Kang, (2012) to predict burnout, as measured through emotional exhaustion. Burnout has

also been linked to disengagement of child welfare case workers in their jobs (Travis, Lizano, & Mor Barak, 2016) and to turnover (Rittschof & Fortunato, 2016; Shim, 2010).

Coping Skills. Child welfare workers are subject to high levels of job stress and burnout, as described previously, and also to vicarious trauma (Bell, Kulkarni, & Dalton, 2003; Jankoski, 2010; Middleton & Potter, 2015). In relation to burnout, Anderson (2000) found that child welfare workers who engaged in active coping strategies had higher levels of personal accomplishment and lower levels of depersonalization whereas workers who relied on avoidant strategies were more likely to experience emotional exhaustion.

Vicarious traumatization is defined by McCann and Pearlman (1990) as experiencing “profound psychological effects, effects that can be disruptive and painful for the helper and can persist for months or years after work with traumatized persons." This definition of vicarious trauma was identified by McCann and Pearlman (1990) in relation to therapists working with victims of trauma, however more recent literature has identified that child welfare workers are also subject to exposure to vicarious trauma (Dane, 2000; Jankoski, 2010; Middleton & Potter, 2015).

For example, in a study of over a thousand child welfare professionals, Middleton and Potter (2015) found that over 33% of participants reported experiencing vicarious trauma directly due to their work. The vicarious traumatization was associated with negatively impacting interpersonal functioning as well as emotional engagement (Middleton & Potter, 2015). From a qualitative lens, Jankoski (2010) also found evidence

that child welfare workers experience vicarious traumatization, including exhibiting signs of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The traumatic situations child welfare workers directly observe, or hear about in interviewing victims can lead to PTSD symptoms such as avoidance, intrusive imageries, and an increased startle response (Jankoski, 2010). Increasing awareness of vicarious trauma (Jankowski, 2010) as well as supporting and enhancing coping skills such as self-care and a work-life balance is vital to protecting child welfare workers from the impact of vicarious trauma and to help prevent burnout (Bell et al., 2003; Jankoski, 2010; Trippany, White Kress, Wilcoxon, 2004).

Affect and organizational performance. This section transitions to a critique of the missing element of affect in current organizational research and how affect impacts performance and outcomes. The importance of measuring individual workers' disposition to determine organizational performance is highlighted in the study by Straw and Barsade (1993). The authors found that measuring dispositional affect was a better predictor of overall organizational performance than was job satisfaction as dispositional affect was a more stable trait overtime than job satisfaction (Straw & Barsade, 1993). Similarly, when studying decision making Andrade and Ariely (2009) found that incidental emotional experiences can influence decision-making longer than the experienced emotion. Further, that emotionally made decisions influence future judgments and decisions, affirming that affect can have long-term impacts on decisions that influence organizational outcomes (Andrade & Ariely, 2009).

Literature regarding affect and performance finds that positive affect, including mood and disposition, is linked with increased performance (Barsade & Gibson, 2007; Straw & Barsade, 1993). Contributing to this are the findings that individuals with positive affect are less likely to be absent and are more likely to go beyond their job expectations, including providing superior customer service than compared to individuals with negative affect (Barsade & Gibson, 2007). Although performance may be empirically linked to positive affect, there is support that negative affect may prove for more systematic decision making (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996).

Research has found that individuals displaying positive moods are more likely to utilize experiential processing strategies, pre-existing knowledge (Schwarz, 2000; Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996), and may inflate the chance of positive outcomes. Individuals displaying negative moods, or affect, may be more aware of problems in a situation, and thus more likely to attend to specifics (Schwarz, 2000; Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). Studies link both positive and negative affect to effective decision making (Barsade & Gibson, 2007). Positive affect can lead to more creative problem solving (Morrison, 2007; Straw & Barsade, 1993) through flexible and efficient processing of new information (Barsade & Gibson, 2007). Further, individuals with highly positive affect are found to make more accurate decisions (Straw & Barsade, 1993).

Accepting that affect has an impact on organizational outcomes through improved performance and decision-making provides support for the need to include the study of affect in how organizational culture and climate is studied. A key debate in the literature

however, is where and how to measure affect. There is conflicting information in looking at where affect belongs. Existing literature places affect as relative to employee performance in three distinct places: first, as a cause of job satisfaction, second, as a direct cause of worker attitudes, and third, as directly related to employee performance. Despite this conflict, the research provides evidence that affect should be included as a factor in organizational culture and climate research.

In addition, developing an understanding of how individual-level factors are associated with organizational culture and climate can have implications for child welfare workforce development. In this study, I sought to further understand the national level findings by studying the culture and climate of one region of a statewide public child welfare agency. I use the lens of ecological systems theory to unearth implications for practice, policy, and research.

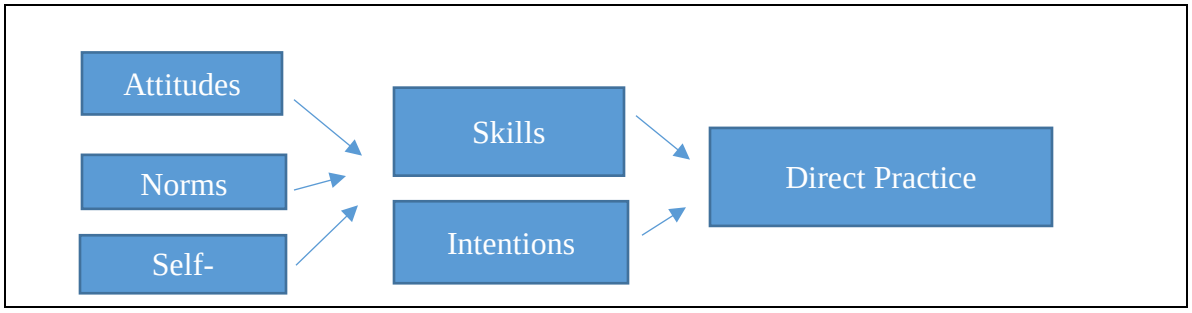
Theoretical Foundation

The theoretical framework for this study is the ecological systems theory. Through a thoughtful and critical review of applicable theories I chose to utilize a theoretical basis that contributes to the overall research design, rather than 'window dressing' for the planned study (Thyer, 2001), along with an awareness that research and observations are not theory free (Gomory, 2001 & Marsh, 2004). An analysis of a selection of highlighted theories that were most applicable is first presented, followed by a discussion of how the ecological systems theory best fits my planned study, acknowledging that I will bring interpretation and meaning to the findings (Marsh, 2004)

and that my research question originated from an observation based on my theoretical orientation (Gomory, 2001).

I initially considered a slightly altered version of Fishbein's theory of planned behavior for use as the theoretical basis, changing behavior to direct practice as shown in Figure 5 (Fishbein, 2000). The concepts in Fishbein's theory, that a change in worker attitudes, self-efficacy, and organizational norms ultimately influence direct practice and outcomes reflected pieces of the planned study. However, Fishbein's theory did not fully explain each element of the planned study. The theory has provided insight into how client outcomes are impacted by organizational level influences. Interestingly, in Glisson's most recent publication, the author proposes a theory of planned behavior change with similar concepts to Fishbein's theory (Glisson & Williams, 2015).

Figure 4. Altered Fishbein's Theory of Planned behavior



Organization Theory seemed perhaps an obvious theory to use in my study. Organization Theory encompasses numerous theories and is interpreted depending on one's ontological perspective (Hatch & Cunliffe, 2012). Essentially, Organizational Theory attempts to (1) explain the functioning of an organization, (2) describe the

universal principles of the organization and how they came to be (3) deconstruct policies and procedures to understand underlying ideologies and (4) develop an understanding of daily life in an organization (Hatch & Cunliffe, 2012). Organization Theory has a history that dates back to the 1900's and has evolved over time (Hatch & Cunliffe, 2012). The theory explains how an organization functions, and in some definitions includes culture and climate elements (Peterson, 2011), however the primary focus is not on how those functions impact direct client outcomes. It was this disconnect that steered me away from Organization Theory as the theoretical basis for this study.

Organizational Culture is both a concept as previously defined and is also referred to in itself as a stand-alone theory (Peterson, 2011). I rely on insights from the theory of Organizational Culture in this study, however it is not sufficient to explain all the organizational factors with which I am concerned. Moreover, my focus on outcomes is not a strength of this theory. In 2013 Glisson proposed the Organizational Culture and Climate theory (OCC) based on his extensive research in the area (Williams & Glisson, Oct. 2013). This theory is promising, as it encompasses youth outcomes. In their 2013 article, the authors test their theory against youth outcomes and find support for their *a priori* hypothesis. I did not choose this theory as I sought a holistic theory that explained the phenomenon rather than the functioning of the OSC scale.

I also explored theoretical perspectives relevant to social work. For example, I considered using systems theory to understand child welfare organizations as complex systems. The concepts within the systems theory, such as boundaries, norms and customs

are reflected in the culture and climate definitions, and provide for some guidance for this study. The idea of feedback to determine if outcomes are met also resonated with the planned research (Friedman & Neuman Allen, 2011). However, systems theory does not encompass the complex relationships between the systems or the ecological environment (Friedman & Neuman Allen, 2011). Ecological Systems Theory, on the other hand, is well-suited to both guide my research and help to link my findings to practice (Marsh, 2004). The article by Yoo (2008) reaffirmed applying the ecological systems theory to my research study.

Theoretical Framework

Over four decades ago Bronfenbrenner introduced the ecological perspective as an alternative approach to assessing children's development (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). Using the ecological perspective, Bronfenbrenner proposed that children and adults should be studied within the nested structures of their own ecological environment rather than as isolated beings in clinical settings (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). Bronfenbrenner (1994) uses the metaphor of Russian dolls to describe the nested systems within the ecological environment. The innermost system is the microsystem, moving to the outermost system, the macrosystem, all encompassed within the dimension of time, the chronosystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). Ecological systems theory is now commonplace in assessing individuals, children and adults, and the eco-map, depicting the individual in the center of their nested circles is a consistent visual in direct service textbooks (Darling, 2007).

Recently, researchers have adapted the ecological systems theory for application to understanding and explaining organizational settings (Johnson, 2008; Tissington, 2008; Yoo, 2008). Use of the ecological systems theory within organizations aids in describing the functioning of complex organizations (Johnson, 2008), acknowledges sociocultural influences (Tissington, 2008), provides for a system to categorize different levels of influence, and provides for a structure to understand the reciprocal interactions between the systems (Newes-Adeyi, Helitzer, Caufield, & Bronner, 2000). One of the basic claims Bronfenbrenner (1979) asserts is that behavior results as an interaction between the individual and their environment, a concept symbolized by theorist Kurt Lewin, the same theorist that the definition of organizational climate is attributed to (Denison, 1996). The ecological systems theory provides a natural framework for studying the nested systems of organizational culture, climate and individual factors in the complex setting of a child welfare agency (see Figure 6).

Microsystems are within the closest proximity to the individual (Langer & Lietz, 2014) and describe the immediate interpersonal relations, as well as the interactions and activities of the individual (Bronfenbrenner, 1979 & 1994). The theory postulates that the individual both influences and is influenced by the microsystem (Johnson, 2008). Bronfenbrenner (1979) argued that too much emphasis is placed on the microsystem with limited recognition of the systemic factors that profoundly influence the behavior of the microsystem.

Extending the ecological systems theory to a child welfare agency, the microsystem includes the worker, the supervisor, clients, providers and support staff. Within the organizational context, the impact of the microsystem is measured through individual-level factors. The study of organization-level factors addresses Bronfenbrenner's concern regarding emphasis being placed solely on the micro system with the recognition of the impact of organizational culture and climate on the individual.

Mesosystems represent the linkages and direct interactions that occur within the microsystems, where the microsystem is actively involved in the interaction (Bronfenbrenner, 1979 & 1994; Langer & Lietz, 2014). These relationships can be healthy or unhealthy, and either encourage change and growth, or inhibit it (Langer & Lietz, 2014). Within the child welfare agency, we see the mesosystem represented in interactions such as those between workers and supervisors and workers and clients. It is within the mesosystem that we can measure the influence these reciprocal transactions have on direct client outcomes.

Exosystems describe the interactions, linkages and processes that occur between two or more systems, at least one of the settings not including the direct individual involved, but causing an indirect influence on the individual (Bronfenbrenner, 1979 & 1994). The exosystem, positioned in the organizational framework, describes how a climate within the child welfare organization is created. The interactions that cause workers to develop shared perceptions and shared attitudes of their work environment are described in the exosystem. For example, workers may perceive their work climate as

stressful when decisions are made about their work without them, such as new policy implemented due to recent media cases, causing role confusion and possible work overload (Langer & Lietz, 2014).

Macrosystems are defined by Bronfenbrenner (1979; 1994) as the blueprint that illustrates a culture or subculture, defining the overarching beliefs, norms, values and customs of the system (Johnson, 2008). The happenings in the macrosystem affect the processes that occur within the microsystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). The measure of culture represents the macrosystem, and as the ecological systems theory assumes, the larger culture of the system has a direct impact on direct client outcomes through the microsystem. In the child welfare setting, the micro system can be seen as the larger agency bureaucratic structure as well as outside forces such as key stakeholders, funding agencies, and legislative bodies.

Chronosystems, a later addition to the ecological theory, represent the dimension of time, which exists outside of the nested systems. The chronosystem evaluates change, and/or consistency, in the characteristics of both the individual and the environment over time (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). The chronosystem of a child welfare agency can be represented by changes that occur daily, yearly and so on within the agency (Johnson, 2008), as well as by larger scale events, such as lawsuites, changes in government officials (Langer & Lietz, 2008), and high profile cases of child abuse and neglect. The chronosystem accounts for external factors, or confounds, that may influence the culture

and climate of the organization and ultimately outcomes for children and families. This element is likely to be listed in the limitation section.

Use of the ecological systems theory as the orienting theoretical framework may result in critique that it was chosen because it is a theory familiar to my social work roots. This critique is accurate, however the decision is justified through the critical analysis. The ecological systems theory has guided my conceptualization of the identified problem and allows for an understanding of each interacting component (Marsh, 2004), Researchers use theory whenever data is collected, and one must be able to articulately argue their rational for a selected theory (Gomory, 2001). It is essential to have awareness that education, training, and practice experience influences a research agenda, and that one does not enter into a research study without a theoretical viewpoint. I chose ecological systems theory because it represents the phenomenon that organizational factors at each level directly impact client outcomes.

Applying the ecological systems theory specifically to child welfare organizational level factors may be unprecedented, however there is support in the literature regarding applying the theory to organizations. Prior to his book in 1979, Bronfenbrenner applied the ecological structures to an educational setting (Bronfenbrenner, 1976). In his nested structures, he placed the learner in the microsystem of the educational setting. Bronfenbrenner's focus is on developmental outcomes of the learner. I propose to substitute the child welfare worker for the learner in this context, and substitute the setting from the educational setting to the child welfare agency. The

outcomes I proposed to study are permanency decisions rather than developmental outcomes.

The application of the ecological systems theory to education organizational settings is seen in the work of Johnson (2008), Poch (2005), and Tissington (2008). For example, Johnson (2008) uses the theory to describe the nested structures within an individual school setting, and how each system impacts student achievement outcomes. In addition, the ecological model has been applied to WIC agencies to gain an understanding of the interactions between behavior and environment (Newes-Adeyi, et al., 2000). Most notably for this study, the theory has been applied to child welfare agencies to gain a better understanding of the relationship between organizational factors and client outcomes (Yoo, 2008).

The ecological systems theory allows for an understanding of how organizational factors influence direct client outcomes. As outlined, the nested systems can appropriately be adopted to represent culture, climate and individual level factors. Situating the connection between direct client outcomes and larger organizational factors through the ecological systems lens allows for the findings and implications to become pragmatic and offer a way to provide plausible explanations to a phenomenon.

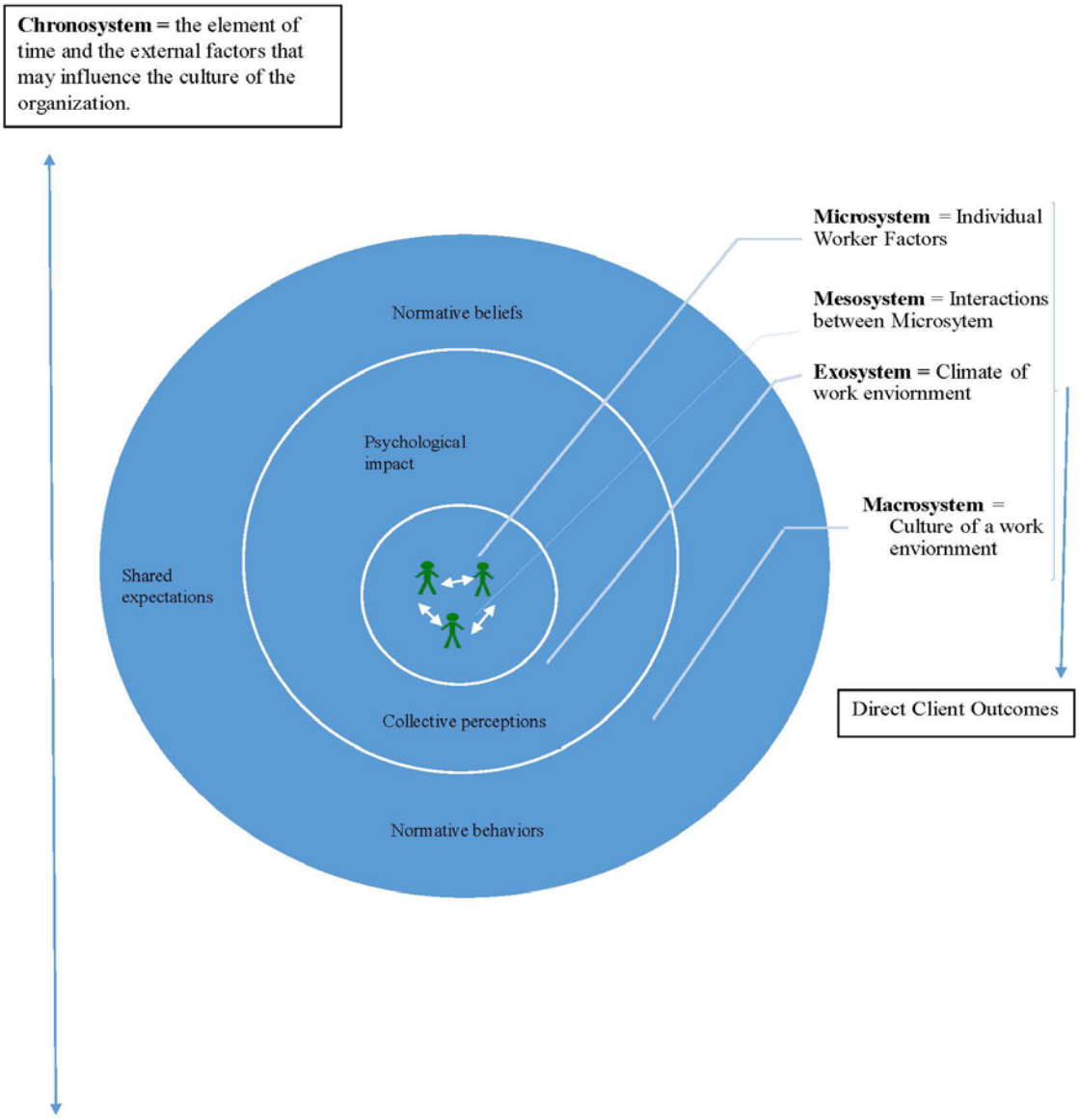
Through an ecological systems theory lens, I examined the degree to which (1) individual-level factors influenced the perception of organizational culture and climate and attempted to assess (2) the association between organizational factors and permanency outcomes. It was hypothesized that (1) individual-level factors will be

associated with one's perceptions of their organizational culture and climate and (2) that work units with positive perceptions of work climate and supportive, engaged, and proficient cultures will achieve enhanced permanency outcomes (Glisson & Hemmelgarn, 1998; Williams & Glisson, 2013).

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between individual-level factors and one's perception of their organizational culture and climate?

Research Question 2: In what ways do organizational culture and climate within child welfare agencies impact permanency outcomes for children placed in out-of-home care?

Figure 5. Ecological Systems Theory Applied to a Child Welfare Organization



CHAPTER 3

METHODS

I selected the methodology for this study through a critical analysis to determine the research design that best matched the research question. Historically, the study of culture required qualitative research methods and the study of climate required quantitative methods (Denison, 1996). This has changed however, and recent research utilizes both methodologies compatible for examining climate and culture (Yammarino & Dansereau, 2011). This following section briefly discusses the use of quantitative designs in culture and climate research.

Quantitative Design

Quantitative research, primarily through the OSC, has provided consistent and replicated evidence of the relationship between organizational factors and direct client outcomes in child welfare. In addition, quantitative data analysis, specifically multilevel path analysis, has tested the theory of Organizational Culture and Climate. Organizational culture and climate researchers have used quantitative methods to identify what factors influence specific child outcomes and to understand what variables are the best predictors of child outcomes.

Outlined in the literature review section, Table 3 illustrates the research design and data analysis plans in the reviewed quantitative studies. Limitations were identified in each of these studies. The first limitation is the lack of experimental or quasi-experimental research designs. Although the authors are careful to avoid causation language, regression analyses are the most frequently applied data analysis, and causation is often implied. Random sampling was also lacking in the studies, restricting the ability

to make inferences to the larger population (Berk, 2004). In addition, a number of studies use the same data set to answer similar research questions. Replication of findings provides helpful confirmation that the claim made has a stronger foundation (Ioannidis, 2005), however use of the same data set raises the question of whether the results are actually replicating the findings or simply restating the same findings.

The benefits of a quantitative approach, as seen in these studies, is the ability to identify what organizational factors best predict child outcomes. In addition, large numbers of child welfare workers have participated in the studies, providing a basis for generalizability of implications. In this study, two key areas influenced the decision to use quantitative methods. First, as previously described, there is a body of research linking organizational level factors to individual-level factors such as turnover, job stress, self-efficacy, and burnout, in addition to the link to direct client outcomes. Although the specific outcome of permanency has only been minimally studied, the phenomenon is not new and the hypothesis that organizational level factors impact direct client outcomes has been tested. Second, the research questions are quantitative in nature.

Quantitative Measurement Instruments

Numerous scales exist that measure culture and climate within organizational settings. In researching options for measurement, I reviewed and considered several instruments. Those prioritized for consideration are displayed in Table 4. Ultimately, due to their use in child welfare research and the establishment of psychometric properties,

the Organizational Social Context Scale (OSC) and the Comprehensive Organizational Health Assessment (COHA) were given the most consideration.

Table 4

Child Welfare Culture and Climate Scales

Scale	Details
Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory (Westbrook, 2006).	Scale created to measure culture specifically to child welfare agencies. Scale has been tested, however not widely used (Westbrook et al., 2009 & 2012; Westbrook & Crolley-Simic, 2012)
Comprehensive Organizational Health Assessment (COHA) (Potter et al., 2016)	Instrument developed to measure a battery of climate, culture, and individual level factors within child welfare settings. Scales have tested reliability and validity and are currently being used in child welfare organizational research (McCrae et al., 2014 & 2015; Middleton & Potter, 2015; Potter et al., 2016)
Organizational Culture Inventory (Cooke & Lafferty, 2015 via Human Synergists International)	Proprietary scale marketed for business to measure operating culture (Human Synergistics International, 2015)
Organizational Social Context Scale (UTCMHRC, 2006)	Proprietary scale used in child welfare settings to measure culture, climate, and worker attitudes in relation to direct client outcomes (Glisson & Green, 2011)
The Parker Psychological Climate Survey (Parker et al., 2003)	Scale used to measure worker's perceptions of their work environment (Blates et al., 2009). This scale is used within the COHA.
Professional Organizational Culture Questionnaire – Social Work (Ellet, 2009)	Scale developed to measure elements of culture including: vision/leadership, collegial teaching and learning, and professional commitment (Ellet, 2009). Elements of this scale are used in the COHA.

The OSC. The OSC scale is a standardized scale utilized in national level child welfare research projects. The OSC requires approval for use by the Children's Mental Health Services Research Center (CMHSRC) as well as a fee to use the scale and to process the data. The psychometric properties of the OSC scale have demonstrated acceptable levels of reliability and validity (Williams & Glisson, 2013). National studies utilizing the OSC have provided evidence of acceptable reliability for each subscale, with alpha levels between .69 and .90 (Glisson, 2010; Williams & Glisson, 2013) and the theorized factor structure was confirmed for use in child welfare studies (Glisson, Green, & Williams, 2012). The OSC contains 105 scaled questions and 10 demographic questions. Culture includes 3 second-order factors, rigid, proficient, and resistant. Climate includes 3 second-order factors of engaged, functional, and stressed.

In addition to the limitations of the OSC that have been reviewed in depth in previous sections, there are limitations to its practical use (Potter et al., 2016). As the OSC is a proprietary measure, the owners of the measure are able to place restrictions on the information provided back to the researcher. When using the OSC the researcher is not allowed knowledge of the key to the constructs, thus is unable to determine which question measures which construct (UTCMHRC, 2006). This limits the range of data analysis available to the researcher, including the inability to test the psychometric properties of the scale for the sample. Additionally, the OSC requires an 80% response rate. Without this response rate, the data will not be analyzed (UTCMHRC, 2006).

I was able to have the majority of the fee waived by the UTCMHSRC to use the OSC for this research, and thus the fee did not factor into the limitations for this study. However, the restriction to receiving both individual level data and the key to the scale left me unable to answer my second research question and to conduct diagnostic tests. There was also concern that due to the high workload of the child welfare workforce, it was foreseen that an 80% response rate was not be practical, resulting in extremely limited data available back from the CMHSRC. Finally, use of the OSC has begun to be listed as a limitation in recent studies (Potter et al., 2016). As a result of the restrictions and limitations to using the OSC, I determined that the OSC was not a good fit for this study.

The COHA. The COHA was developed at the University of Denver Butler Institute for families as part of a demonstration project spanning five years. The COHA is a practical measurement to evaluate individual, work unit, and organizational level factors within child welfare systems (Potter et al., 2016). The Butler Institute provides free use of the instrument, allows the researcher full access to all data, and makes the researcher responsible for analyzing the data. The COHA is comprised of 20 scales, developed through exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis (Potter et al., 2016).

Although the COHA is a recent addition to the measures of culture and climate, it is currently being utilized in several studies, including studies sponsored by the National Child Workforce Institute (Potter et al., 2016). Published studies using scales within the COHA examine the relationship between vicarious trauma and retention of child welfare

workers (Middleton & Potter, 2015), the relationship between job satisfaction and retention (McCrae et al., 2014), and child welfare worker readiness for change (McCrae et al., 2014). Details of the psychometric properties of the COHA are described in the next section.

Research Design

This study aimed to explore (1) the association between individual-level factors impacting child welfare workers and their perception of their organizational culture and climate and (2) organizational factors and children's ability to achieve timely permanency. In addition, a description of the region's organizational culture and climate is provided and implications for future research are discussed. Conducting this practice-informed, community-based research involved collaborating with the child welfare agency, implementing a user-friendly research design to engage participants, and strategizing ways to disseminate findings.

To initiate the collaboration with the child welfare agency, I first reached out to the director of the region within the child welfare agency of interest with assistance from my dissertation chair. The agency's research team was then engaged to gain approval for the research as well as to discuss feasibility and implementation, including gaining access to staff emails and administrative data. The agency's research director recommended reducing the length of the original proposed measurement, thus resulting in the final scales used for this study. Strategies to disseminate the findings are ongoing, and will be discussed in the implications section of this dissertation.

This study utilized an explanatory correlation design (Rubin & Babbie, 2008; Shadish, Cook, & Campbell, 2002), using both cross-sectional data and retrospective administrative data with a non-probability convenience sample. The cross-sectional data was gathered at a point-in-time through the electronic survey sent to the foster care workers. To increase the validity of the findings, triangulation was embedded in the research design through an open-ended question (Creswell, 2014). The administrative data included permanency outcomes for all children in the region retrospectively from one year past to the date of the study. As an explanatory design, this study aimed to look for explanations for (1) why workers with different individual-level factors may perceive the culture and climate of their agency differently and (2) why permanency outcomes may differ between units in the same regional area.

Sampling Frame. The population of interest was inclusive of all child welfare units handling court involved cases in a specified region in a large southwestern state (N = 186). The unit of analysis for the first research question was the individual foster care worker. The unit of analysis for the second research question was defined as the child welfare work unit (N = 32). Work units are identified as the supervisor and the corresponding foster care workers who are assigned to that supervisor. Only those units assigned cases with children placed out-of-home with court involvement were included, referred to for the purposes of this study as 'Foster Care units.'

The inclusion of all foster care units in the specified region resulted in an apparent population. An apparent population is one where all data available are collected in a

single batch (Berk, Western, & Weiss, 1995). Use of an apparent population requires awareness to how the population is treated, as a true population, or a sample when determining data analysis. Concerns with sampling error must be considered in apparent populations (Berk et al., 1995), for example, the apparent population may differ from the larger population of ongoing child welfare workers across the state or nationally.

Data Collection & Measurements. The cross-sectional data was gathered through an electronic administration of the survey. As further described in the measurement section, two scales were utilized, the Comprehensive Organizational Health Assessment (COHA) and the Positive and Negative Affect Scale (PANAS). The survey software Qualtrics was utilized, and quantitative data was transferred to SPSS 23 for analysis. The data for the open-end responses were analyzed using Word to identify and denote themes. Administrative retrospective permanency data were provided by the agency through a secure system in Excel format.

The initial plan was to conduct separate data analysis strategies to answer the two main research questions. The first involved exploring the relationship between individual factors and organizational culture and climate using bivariate analysis and multiple regression analysis as guided by previous work using the COHA (McCrae et al., 2014) with an analysis of the open-ended responses to provide for triangulation (Creswell, 2014) and a further understanding of the organization's functioning. The second intended to examine the relationship between organizational culture and climate and permanency outcomes using descriptive analysis. As described in detail in a later section, due to the

inability to utilize the permanency data, it was decided, in consultation with my dissertation chair, that the second analysis would consist of providing a description of the regional culture and climate as described by the scores on the COHA.

Upon IRB approval from both the university and the state agency, the 186 foster care workers were e-mailed a survey link. Using Qualtrics software, each foster care worker was sent a unique anonymized link to the survey so that the survey could not be forwarded to unintended participants. Participants were able to skip any questions and/or end their participation in the study at any point. At the end of the survey, participants were offered the opportunity to receive the incentive by clicking on a link to take them to a separate Qualtrics survey to enter their information. There was no way to link the participant's identity from the incentive information to their survey responses. Seventy-three participants requested and received the incentive.

Survey Data. The state agency provided a list of all emails for the foster care workers in the region (N = 186). Several strategies were used to increase the response rate and usability for the electronic survey (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2014). To increase the response rate, the regional director agreed to send an e-mail to the foster care workers prior to the launch of the survey to provide notification that the survey was coming, to inform staff that study had been approved by the agency, and to encourage participation. Incentives were provided for participation, and a series of reminder e-mails were sent. Due to a change in management the week prior to the launch of the study, it was discovered that the introductory e-mail was not sent.

The initial response rate was extremely low, and it was decided to increase the number of incentives to encourage participation. The initial plan for incentives had been to have a drawing for ten $25 gift cards. Upon IRB approval, it was decided to provide the first 100 participants a $25 gift card. After the first e-mail notifying participants of the new incentive, the response rate increased. Reminder e-mails were then sent with notifications of how many gift cards remained.

Permanency Measurement. Permanency data were gathered for all cases closed one year prior from the date of study from all included foster care units in the region. The cases were separated into reunification and guardianship cases. I was not able to use the permanency outcome of adoption as the adoption cases in the region were finalized by separate units that were not included in the study. I consulted with the data analyst to ensure a correct interpretation and understanding of the permanency data.

I created separate continuous scales to measure time to each permanency outcome by unit for all closed cases based on the number of days to permanency from initial removal. To increase the benefit of natural occurring variability, and reduce the potential threat of regression to the mean, days-to-permanency was examined in conjunction with months to permanency. The data were aggregated for each permanency outcome and means calculated per outcome for each unit. There appeared to be sibling groups within the data, however this could not be confirmed, and may have impacted the average time to permanency.

In addition, I examined the number of children who achieved permanency for each outcome. It was discovered that the number of children in each outcome was small, with some units for example only having one child reunified. Only including those units with at least 10 children to avoid including unintended units, there was an average of about 29 children reunified in each unit during the year time frame (with a range of 11 to 68). Considering sibling groups, there was for example one unit that had 26 total children reunified, however it appears that 5 of those may have been sibling groups, leaving only 13 individual cases of reunification. In consultation with my dissertation committee it was decided that due to the concern with the small sample in each unit, and the lack of within-group agreement of culture and climate scores, as described in a later section, that for the purposes of this dissertation the outcome data could not be included in the analysis.

Organizational Factors Measurements. Data measuring the variables (a) culture, (b) climate, and (c) individual-level factors were collected through an administration of select scales from the COHA and the PANAS. Culture is measured through questions evaluating the normative beliefs and behavioral expectations that describe the functioning of an organization. Questions measuring climate assesses the psychological impact of the work environment. The individual factors measured were job satisfaction, coping skills, self-efficacy, job stress, and burnout. Concurrent with the COHA scale, individual affect was measured through use of the PANAS measurement.

The COHA. The COHA was originally created to evaluate an organizational intervention in three western states as part of a five-year demonstration project funded by the Children's Bureau (Potter et al., 2016). Rigorous analysis was used to confirm the included scales and to test for the psychometric properties (Potter et al., 2016). Researchers at the Butler institute continue to evaluate the psychometric properties of the scale and ask for researchers who use the scale to share data when possible to test the properties on various samples. Displayed in Table 5 are the nine scales within the COHA that were selected for use in this study to best measure the constructs and to provide for a reasonable length. The COHA also includes an open-ended question that was incorporated into this study. The information for the COHA was taken from the information provided by the University of Denver Butler Institute for Families Comprehensive Organizational Health Assessment (COHA) Scale Psychometrics. The Butler Institute for families granted permission to use the scale with citation (Potter, Leake, Longworth-Reed, Altschul, & Shauna Rienks, 2016).

PANAS Measurement. The Positive and Negative Affect measurement is a short questionnaire that asks 10 questions regarding positive affect and 10 regarding negative affect. Positive Affect is characterized in individuals who are active, enthusiastic, and alert (Watson, et al., 1988). Negative affect is a range of subjective distress that may appear in the form of anger, disgust, nervousness, or fear (Watson et al., 1988). Participants are asked to rate on a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being "very slightly or not at all" and 5 being "extremely" how a particular word describes them. The PANAS can be used to

measure affect at a specific moment, over a specific time-period, or in general (Watson, et al., 1988; Watson & Clark; 1994). Permission to utilize the PANAS was granted through the APA.

The psychometric properties of the PANAS scale have been established, however not with a child welfare workforce sample. Internal consistency has been found to range between $\alpha = .86$ and .90 (Watson, et al., 1988; Watson & Clark; 1994). The scale has also been tested for its ability to measure affect over a period of time through test-retest reliability, and has been found to be stable over every time frame in that "even momentary moods are, to a certain extent, reflections of one's general affective level" (Watson et al., 1988, p. 1065). In addition, Watson et al. (1988), to test scale and item validity utilized factor analysis. Construct validity was measured by matching self-reported scores to corresponding scores rated by peers and significant others, and evidence was found to support the validity of the measurement (Watson & Clark, 1994).

Description of the Data

The cross-sectional data was first examined for missing data and to identify outliers and was tested for relevant assumptions. An audit trail was kept of all decisions made regarding any changes to the data or removal of participants. Only one participant was identified as needing to be removed from the sample due to self-identifying as being in a position that was not intended for the sample. A second participant had irregular responses, potentially suggesting random responses as seen in the inverse coded

questions. This participant's demographic information was included, however their scores on the scales were excluded from analysis.

Variables were reverse coded as required and scales were created by adding the individual questions for each scale and dividing by the number of questions. For participants who had incomplete responses to their scales, a mean score was created using the number of questions the participant answered. There were very few participants who had any missing data, most of the missing data was on the Parker climate scale, with 9 participants who did not fully complete the scale. Mean scores were only created for participants who responded to the majority of the subscale. The internal reliability using Cronbach's Alpha was tested for each scale and was compared to the previous scale validations (see Table 5). There were no concerns with regression assumptions for the scale data, however the data measuring years of service and supervision were not normally distributed and lacked variability (for example, looking at years in a current unit, the skew was 2.25 and the kurtosis was 6.29. making the data leptokurtic and with a positive skew). Additionally, participants were asked to report their unit number, 32 units were identified. The unit numbers were de-identified.

Table 5

COHA & PANAS Scale Psychometrics

Measure and Authors	M(SD), α	Number of Items	General Description of the Scale
Copenhagen Burnout Inventory Personal Work-related Client-related[1]	3.10(.77), .94 α = .87 α = .87 α = .85	8	A state of prolonged physical and psychological exhaustion that can be personal, work, and /or client related
Coping Strategies (Butler Institute for Families, 2009)[1]	3.28(.80), .89	15	Coping strategies used to prevent burnout or secondary trauma.
Job Satisfaction (New York Social Work Education Consortium, 2001 and Spector, 1985)[1]	3.60(.76), .85	6	Overall job satisfaction measured by personal and relational fulfillment.
Job Stress (TCU Institute of Behavioral Research, Fort Worth)[1]	3.82(.89), .88	5	Job stressors and job pressures of child welfare work.
Leadership (Butler Institute for Families, 2014)[3]	3.40(.80), .96	18	Perceptions of agency leadership practices.

Table 5 Continued

Learning Culture (Butler Institute for Families, 2014)[2]	3.08(.98), .93	11	Perception of how the organization promotes and engages in a culture of learning.
Parker Psychological Climate (Baltes, Zhdanova, & Parker, 2009)[3]		32	Individual perceptions about the work and organizational environment.
Total Scale	3.49(.54), .93		
Clarity	3.74(.73), .80		
Conflict	3.03(.85), .79		
Importance	4.20(.57), .76		
Autonomy	3.32(81), .85		
Challenge	4.22(.56), .81		
Innovation	3.27(.84), .87		
Justice	3.19(.89), .90		
Support	3.01(.99), .92		
Self-Efficacy (TCU Institute of Behavioral Research, Fort Worth)[1]	4.11(.56), .87	5	Perception of one's ability to perform their work.
Team Cohesion (New York Social Work Education Consortium, 2001)[2]	3.61(.71), .94	9	Perception of team work and collaboration.
PANAS Positive[1]	3.50(0.64), .88	10	The positive affect scale is comprised of 10 words that demonstrate positive affect.

Table 5 Continued

PANAS Negative[1]	1.81(0.59), .87	10	The negative affect scale is comprised of 10 words that demonstrate negative affect.

(University of Denver Butler Institute for Families, 2016; Kristensen et al., 2005; Watson et al., 1988)
1=Individual Factors; 2=Culture 3=Climate

Ethical Considerations

Ensuring that the research is ethical starts prior to beginning the study with the development of the research question. Strengthening the child welfare workforce and identifying barriers to children establishing timely permanency, the problem that identified, needs attention. The implications from the findings, moreover, could benefit both the children involved in the child welfare system and the workforce. The study received approval through the IRB at ASU, and from the IRB at the Department of Family and Protective Services in the state of study. The population selected is not considered vulnerable, and the questions in the COHA and PANAS are not sensitive in nature. Because the population of interest is overworked and stressed, and their time is valuable, data collection occurred via an e-mail link to the survey. This was meant to ease participation and allow participants to complete the survey in familiar environment without needing to travel.

Informed consent was obtained prior to disseminating the survey, with no pressure to participate. Participants were informed of the purpose of the study, the benefits for participating, the level of participation involved, and the risks that might occur due to their participation. They were also given a guarantee of confidentiality and

made aware that they could withdrawal their participation at any time. Finally they were given contact information for any questions that might arise (Creswell, 2014). There exists the concern of social desirability because workers may feel pressure to say the right thing due to the hierarchical relationship with supervisors or pressure from the media and upper administration. To minimize this, the workers were able to take the survey privately. The confidentiality of their participation was also clearly communicated to the participants.

Incentives were provided for participation in this study and paid for by personal funding. All participants who requested the incentive received a $25 gift card to Amazon. Participants did not have to fully complete the survey to be eligible for the gift card. There were minimal risks involved with the study, however resources were prepared to refer participants to should they experience any negative emotions while completing the survey. These high ethical standards were maintained both before and during data collection, as well as during data analysis and reporting. The privacy and confidentiality of the data was respected and I have reported the interpretation of the results accurately. No information will be disclosed that may cause harm to a participant (Creswell, 2014).

To increase the accountability and the rigor of the study, I maintained an audit trail to track all research procedures and decisions, including decisions made when cleaning and analyzing the data. I also used the audit trail to record researcher reflexivity and any other issues that might arise during the study. The research team consisting of my dissertation committee provided oversight of the project and were available for

consultation when needed. For example, my committee provided consultation regarding the reporting of the permanency outcome data. After a thorough review of their concerns, a united decision was made to not include the data in this analysis.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Description of the Individual Level Sample

The demographic data collected included years of experience, position in the agency, supervisory information, age, education level, race, and gender. Eighty-six individuals opened the survey link, however 7 participants who opened the survey did not respond to any of the questions. As previously mentioned, two participants were removed from the final data analysis. The one participant who identified as not being a foster care worker was removed entirely from the final sample, resulting in final sample size of 78 or a 41.93% response rate.

Age, Race, and Gender. Participants were asked to list their age numerically. The average age was about 34 (M = 34.22), however the mode for age was 25. Table 6 displays the ages of participants collapsed into 5 year increments, showing that the majority of participants were 35 or under (n = 48, 63.16%). Race/ethnicity was asked categorically with the option for an open-ended response. As shown in Table 6, the majority of the sample identified as Caucasian (n = 48, 61.54%), and the next largest group identifying as African American (n = 18, 23.10%). Participants were asked to respond to the open-ended question, *How do you identify your gender?* It was decided to ask this question as open-ended to allow participants to self-identify. One participant wrote in their response “thanks for making this a freeform answer.” The vast majority of the sample indicated they were female (n = 71, 91.03%) (Table 6).

Table 6

Demographic characteristics

Demographic Characteristic		*n*	Percent
Age			
	21-25	18	23.68%
	26-30	14	18.42%
	31-35	16	21.05%
	36-40	13	17.11%
	40-45	4	5.26%
	46-50	4	5.26%
	51-60	7	9.21%
	Total	76	100.00%
Race/Ethnicity			
	African American	18	23.10%
	Caucasian	48	61.54%
	Latino/Hispanic	9	11.54%
	Multiracial	2	2.56%
	Other	1	1.28%
	Total	78	100.00%
Gender			
	Female	71	91.03%
	Female cisgender	1	1.28%
	Male	6	7.69%
	Total	78	100.00%

Education. The survey asked two questions regarding participants' education. First, participants were asked to report the highest level of school completed or highest degree received. Second, participants responded to the question *what was the area of study in your highest degree?* All respondents reported having a college degree, with almost 80% having a bachelor's degree (*n* = 62) (Table 7). Twenty-five different types of

degrees were reported. Types of degrees were collapsed, degrees that were unrelated to child welfare, such as history, animal science, and marketing were collapsed into "other, non-related." Related degrees such as counseling and family and child development with very few participants were collapsed into "other, related" (Table 7). Social work represented the highest frequency of area of degree (*n* = 23, 29.5%). There were about 19% of participants who had degrees that appeared mostly unrelated to child welfare work (*n* = 15).

Table 7

Education

Education Variable		n	Percent
Education Level			
	Bachelor's degree	62	79.49%
	Master's degree	16	20.51%
	Total	78	100.00%
Highest degree area	Criminal Justice	12	15.38%
	Psychology (Various)	18	23.08%
	Social Work	23	29.49%
	Other (related)	10	12.82%
	Other (non-related)	15	19.23%
	Total	78	100.00%

Experience in child welfare. To further understand the sample, participants were asked to report on their years of experience in their current work unit, at the agency, and in child welfare overall. The data indicate that the sample represented a new workforce to the agency. Almost 59% of respondents indicated they had been in their current unit for 1

year or less (n = 46) and about 41% had been at the agency for 1 year or less (n = 32). Participants did report slightly higher amounts of time working in the field of child welfare, however over half of the sample had 3 years or less of experience in the field (n = 44, 56.41%). Of note is the three-year mark for each of the years of experience. Year 3 represented the largest percentage for total years of experience in child welfare, and was the second largest in time at agency, and third for time in current unit (Table 8).

Table 8

Years of experience

Time in current unit	*n*	Percent	Time at agency	*n*	Percent	Time in child welfare	*n*	Percent
Less than one year	23	29.49%	Less than one year	20	25.97%	Less than one year	11	14.10%
1 year	23	29.49%	1 year	12	15.58%	1 year	10	12.82%
2 years	9	11.54%	2 years	8	10.39%	2 years	9	11.54%
3 years	11	14.10%	3 years	16	20.78%	3 years	14	17.95%
4 years	6	7.69%	4 years	5	6.49%	4 years	10	12.82%
5 years	2	2.56%	5 years	3	3.90%	5 years	6	7.69%
6 years	0	-	6 years	5	6.49%	6 years	3	3.85%
7 years	0	-	7 years	1	1.30%	7 years	2	2.56%
8 years	2	2.56%	8 years	4	5.19%	8 years	3	3.85%
10 - 12 years	1	1.28%	10 - 12 years	1	1.30%	10 - 12 years	3	3.85%
Over 12 years	1	1.28%	Over 12 years	2	2.60%	Over 12 years	4	5.13%
Total	78	100.00%	Total	77	100.00%	Total	78	100.00%

Supervision. In examining how one perceives the culture and climate of their agency, it was necessary to take into account how long an employee has been under the same supervisor, and how many supervisors they have had. The results from the two questions surrounding supervision, *how long have you been under the same supervisor* and *how many supervisors have you had in the past year*, reflected the years of experience questions. About 70% of participants indicated having had one supervisor during the past year (n = 55), and almost 75% had been with their supervisor for one year or less (n = 58). The time with the same supervisor results match the results for the time in the same unit. Considering that over 70% of respondents had not experienced a supervision change during the year included in the study, there is some control for the potential confound of supervisory changes in assessing organizational climate.

Table 9

Supervision

Number of Supervisors in the past year	*n*	Percent	Time with the Same Supervisor	*n*	Percent
1 supervisor	55	70.51%	Less than 1 year	35	44.87%
2 supervisors	17	21.79%	1 year	23	29.50%
3 supervisors	4	5.13%	2 years	9	11.54%
4 supervisors	1	1.28%	3 years	7	8.97%
More than 5	1	1.28%	4 years	2	2.56%
Total	78	100.00%	5 years	1	1.28%
			7 years	1	1.28%
			Total	78	100.00%

Individual-Level Factors

The individual-level factors examined were burnout, coping strategies, job satisfaction, self-efficacy, job stress, and affect. Table 10 shows the mean scores for each scale and the internal reliability level (see Appendix A for individual questions). The psychometric properties were found to be similar to those of the established properties. It was noted that negative affect was higher for this sample and positive affect lower than in the sample of undergraduate students on which the scale was tested (Watson, et al., 1988).

Table 10

Individual level factors

Scale	*n*	*M*(SD)	α
Copenhagen Burnout	77	3.24(0.64)	0.93
Personal	77	3.51(0.66)	0.84
Work	77	3.42(0.77)	0.89
Client	77	2.76(0.73)	0.86
Coping Strategies	76	3.06(0.82)	0.89
Job Satisfaction	76	3.55(0.77)	0.86
Self-Efficacy	76	3.92(0.62)	0.85
Job Stress	76	3.98(0.79)	0.91
Positive Affect	73	3.31(0.71)	0.92
Negative Affect	73	2.07(0.63)	0.86

Burnout. Individual burnout was measured through three dimensions, personal, work related, and client related on the Copenhagen Burnout Inventory (CBI) as part of the COHA. The COHA provides for psychometric properties for the scale as a whole. Theoretically, the CBI identifies fatigue and exhaustion as central to burnout (Kristensen,

2005). Participants identified that, on average, the highest level of burnout experienced was personal (M = 3.51, n = 77) as measured by questions such as *How often do you feel worn out?* The lowest level of burnout was, on average, client related (M = 2.76, n = 77). A bivariate analysis of the subscales found that the relationship between personal and work-related burnout was the strongest (r = 0.86), and client-related and personal burnout as the weakest relationship of the three (r = 0.51) (Table 11).

Table 11

Bivariate Correlation of CBI

	M(SD)	Personal	Work Related	Client Related
Personal	3.51(0.66)	-	0.86**	0.51**
Work Related	3.42(0.77)	0.86**	-	0.61**
Client Related	2.76(0.73)	0.51**	0.61**	-

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Coping Strategies. The measure utilized to evaluate coping strategies was developed at the Butler Institute for Families in 2009 (COHA, 2016). The questions on the scale measure the coping strategies child welfare workers utilize to prevent the impact of vicarious/secondary trauma and cope with factors that may cause burnout. Coping strategies identified in the measure include having a clear self-care plan, having a support system, and the use of humor amongst other factors. On average, participants indicated an average score of 3.06 (n = 76) on a 5-point frequency scale (indicating how often they engaged in a certain activity), slightly lower than the sample the scale was tested on.

Job Satisfaction. The job satisfaction scale was developed as part of the COHA by utilizing 4 items from the New York Social Work Education Consortium workforce

retention survey (2001) and 2 items from the Spector (1985) survey measuring human service staff satisfaction (COHA, 2016). Job satisfaction is measured through feelings of success, accomplishment, appreciation, fit, and enjoyment of the work. For this study, on average, participants rated their level of job satisfaction at 3.55 (n = 76) on a 5-point agreement scale, almost identical to the average on the tested population.

Self-Efficacy. Child welfare workers' feeling of confidence to perform their job is measured through the self-efficacy scale, adapted from the TCU Institute of Behavioral Research organization readiness for change scale for use in the COHA. On a 5-point agreement scale participants indicate their level of confidence and effectiveness in their work along with their skill and planning ability. On average, participants in this study scored 3.92 (n = 76), slightly lower than the level of self-efficacy found in the previous tested sample (M = 4.11).

Job Stress. The pressures and stressors of child welfare work are measured through 5 questions also adapted from the TCU scale for the inclusion in the COHA. Participants are asked to rate their level of agreement on a 5-point scale to questions regarding workload, pressures of the job, and overall stress. This sample indicated a slightly higher level of stress on average (M = 3.98, n = 76) than the tested sample of child welfare workers from the Butler Institute (M = 3.82).

Affect. Individual affect, delineated as positive and negative affect, was measured using the Positive and Negative Affect Scale (Watson & Clark, 1994). Participants responded to a 5-point scale from very slightly or not at all to extremely regarding the

way the generally feel at work. Comparing psychometric properties provided for some limitations. The scale was tested on a group of undergraduate college students, the comparison for this sample was with the “in general” wording of the question of the tested population. On average, this sample reported slightly lower positive affect (*M* = 3.31 compared to *M* = 3.50) and higher levels of negative affect (*M* = 2.07 compared to *M* = 1.81). However, comparing to the tested population when asked “during the past year” rather than “in general” the average negative affect scores on the tested population were higher (*M* = 2.21) (Watson et al., 1988).

Organizational Factors

The organizational level factors examined were leadership, learning culture, team cohesiveness, and organizational culture as measured on the COHA. The included scales were those identified by the COHA to measure organizational and unit level functioning. Participants were asked to respond to how they perceived the elements of the organizational culture and climate through the four scales. The internal consistency and mean scores of the sample in this study were found to be comparable to those in the tested child welfare population (Table 12) (See Appendix B for a full list of the questions).

Table 12

Organizational Level Factors

Scale	*n*	*M*(SD)	α
Learning Culture	75	3.10(0.93)	0.95
Team Cohesion	73	3.42(0.76)	0.92
Leadership	75	3.32(0.83)	0.93
Parker Climate Scale	73	3.43(0.55)	0.95
Clarity	77	3.66(0.65)	0.69
Conflict	72	2.83(0.74)	0.77
Importance	73	4.05(0.62)	0.86
Autonomy	73	3.30(0.79)	0.86
Challenge	74	4.11(0.64)	0.85
Innovation	72	3.33(0.83)	0.85
Justice	74	3.33(0.85)	0.91
Support	74	2.87(0.91)	0.94

Organizational Culture. The two scales utilized to examine organizational culture were those that best examined how work is done in the unit and the organization with the least amount of interpretation from the worker, learning culture, and team cohesion. Learning culture evaluates the value an organization or unit places on engaging and promoting learning activities. An organization with a culture of learning can be identified as more supportive, engaged, and proficient. The learning culture scale was developed specifically for inclusion in the COHA and includes 11 questions asking participants to rate the frequency that their organization promotes or engages in learning

activities on a 5-point scale. On average, participants in this study rated their organization at $M = 3.10$ ($n = 75$), slightly above the tested sample ($M = 3.08$)

Team cohesion was included as a culture scale as the questions aim to identify how the unit as whole functions, including beliefs and values of the unit. The scale was developed by the New York Social Work Education Consortium as part of the workforce retention survey and includes 9 questions. Participants rate their level of agreement on a 5-point scale with statements such as: *this unit frequently seeks new information that leads us to make important changes.* The sample from this study on average rated the level of team cohesion at $M = 3.42$ ($n = 73$), slightly lower than the Butler sample ($M = 3.62$).

Organizational Climate. The Parker Climate Scale and the Leadership Scale were selected to measure how workers describe their work environment. The Parker Climate Scale was the longest subscale used with 32 questions measuring 8 sub-constructs of climate to examine one's perception of their work environment (Baltes, Zhdanova, & Parker, 2009). The scale measures the level of agreement to statements such as *I have a great deal of freedom to decide how to do my job,* on a 5-point scale. On average, participants' score for this sample for the climate scale was $M = 3.43$ ($n = 73$), almost identical to the tested population ($M = 3.49$).

Leadership. The leadership scale was selected as it is intended to measure how a worker interprets the impact of leadership on their work environment through questions such as: *Leaders at my agency treat staff with courtesy, sensitivity, and respect*. The

leadership scale was developed specially for the COHA and asks 18 questions on a 5-point agreement scale. The average score for this sample was slightly lower than the tested sample (M = 3.32, n = 75 versus M = 3.40). The scales selected to measure organizational culture and climate and individual factors provide for the ability to examine how different individual factors may relate to how one rates their organization.

Individual-Level Findings

To test H_1, the association between the individual level factors and one's perception of their culture and climate, Pearson's correlations coefficients were first used to determine preliminary relationships. Variables that showed a medium to large effect size (r = ± .30 medium effect; r = ± .50 large effect; Field, 2013) and a significant correlation were used in the multiple regression analysis. The multiple regression enabled a preliminary look at predicting values of culture and climate given the independent variables. The sample size is adequate to conduct inferential analysis using a linear regression model (Field, 2013). To control for Type I error, finding a significant relationship when there is not, the number of tests conducted was limited (Field, 2013). In addition, confidence intervals and variance were utilized to assess the relationship in addition to the level of significance. To address statistical power and reduce the limitations of a Type II error, missing a significant effect, I considered the number of predictors that were used (Fields, 2013), and variables approaching significance are discussed.

An *a priori* power analysis using G*Power found that with the anticipated sample size of about 80 with 9 predictor variables the power would be 0.60, with the actual sample size, the power level was closer to 0.55 (Faul, Erdfelder, Buchner, & Lang, 2009). According to Fields (2013), a power level of 0.80 is looked for, however, finding significant effect implies sufficient power. Remaining aware of the concern with the lack of power, the two scales with subscales (Parker Climate and the Copenhagen Burnout Inventory) were analyzed in their entirety to reduce the number of predictor variables and variables that were approaching significance are identified. In addition, the only control variable was the type of degree. Because years of service and years under the same supervisor had such minimal variation, I determined that there was less of a need to control for the potential variance of those demographic characteristics.

Bivariate Analysis

A bivariate correlation allows for the testing of an association or absence of an association between two variables and the strength of that association (Field, 2013). Bivariate correlation was utilized here to preliminarily examine the relationships between the individual level factors and the organizational level factors. Previous research using the COHA utilized this approach to data analysis in order to determine which variables to include in the multivariate analysis (McCrae et al., 2014). Table 13 shows that each individual level variable is significantly associated with the organizational level variables, and that those associations are mostly large ($r \geq \pm .50$) or strongly medium ($r \geq$

± .40), thus all scales were determined appropriate to include in the multiple regression analysis.

The correlations between the subscales are displayed in Tables 14 and 15. It was found that there were weak relationships between Parker Climate challenge subscale and the importance subscale with the individual level factors, with the challenge subscale showing the weakest relationships. I removed Parker Climate Challenge subscale from the full scale to test if removal of the scale changed the findings in the multiple regression analysis. It did not, and thus it remained in the analysis.

In the correlation analysis, the largest associations identified were in relation to the Parker Climate scale. Both burnout (r = -0.66) and negative affect (r = -0.67) were negatively associated with the Parker climate scale, in that as scores increased on the burnout and negative affect scales, they decreased on the climate scale. Inversely, job satisfaction (r = 0.72) and positive affect (r = 0.72) were positively associated with the Parker climate scale, as scores increase on the job satisfaction and positive affect scale, they are correlated with an increase in scores on the parker climate scale. Of the individual level factors, job satisfaction and positive affect demonstrated the largest associations overall with the culture and climate scales.

Table 13

Correlations between individual level factors and organizational level factors

	M(SD)	Team Cohesion *M* = 3.42(.76)	Learning Culture *M* = 3.10(.93)	Leadership *M* = 3.31(.83)	Parker Climate *M* = 3.43(.55)
Burnout	3.24(.64)	-0.53**	-0.45**	-0.43**	-0.66**
Coping Strategies	3.06(.82)	0.45**	0.52**	0.42**	0.51**
Job Satisfaction	3.55(.77)	0.61**	0.57**	0.57**	0.72**
Self-Efficacy	3.92(.62)	0.52**	0.41**	0.43**	0.55**
Job Stress	3.98(.79)	-0.52**	-0.54**	-0.52**	-0.63**
Positive Affect	3.31(.71)	0.56**	0.61**	0.60**	0.72**
Negative Affect	2.07(.63)	-0.54**	-0.42**	-0.58**	-0.67**

Table Collapsed. ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 14

Correlations with burnout subscales

	M(SD)	Team Cohesion	Learning Culture	Leadership	Parker Climate
Personal Burnout	3.51(0.66)	-0.48**	-0.47**	-0.41**	-0.60**
Work Related Burnout	3.42(0.77)	-0.51**	-0.47**	-0.46**	-0.63**
Client Related Burnout	2.76(0.73)	-0.40**	-0.25*	-0.24*	-0.48**

Table Collapsed

*Correlation significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed) **Correlation significant at the 0.01level (2-tailed)

Table 15

Correlations with Parker Climate subscales

	Parker Climate	Parker Clarity	Parker Conflict	Parker Importance	Parker Autonomy	Parker Challenge	Parker Innovation	Parker Justice	Parker Support
Coping Strategies	0.51**	0.46**	0.46**	0.15	0.40**	0.14	0.37**	0.42**	0.46**
Job Satisfaction	0.72**	0.44**	0.44**	0.39**	0.67**	0.39**	0.58**	0.60**	0.56**
Self-Efficacy	0.55**	0.45**	0.32**	0.37**	0.52**	0.17	0.44**	0.47**	0.36**
Job Stress	-0.63**	-0.35**	-0.63**	-0.07	-0.55**	-0.07	-0.51**	-0.59**	-0.68**
Positive Affect	0.72**	0.44**	0.57**	0.42**	0.62**	0.26*	0.56**	0.55**	0.61**
Negative Affect	-0.67**	-0.53**	-0.46**	-0.40**	-0.62**	-0.30**	-0.49**	-0.55**	-0.44**
Burnout - Full Scale	-0.66**	-0.51**	-0.53**	-0.32**	-0.55**	-0.27*	-0.45**	-0.52**	-0.55**
Personal Burnout	-0.60**	-0.52**	-0.49**	-0.25*	-0.45**	-0.18	-0.41**	-0.52**	-0.55**
Work Burnout	-0.63**	-0.45**	-0.52**	-0.27*	-0.56**	-0.25*	-0.42**	-0.53**	-0.57**
Client Burnout	-0.48**	-0.39**	-0.39**	-0.33**	-0.43**	-0.27*	-0.36**	-0.33**	-0.33**

Table Collapsed. * Correlation significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed) ** Correlation significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Regression Analysis

A descriptive regression analysis was employed in order to conditionally describe the relationships between the variables of interest (as described by Berk, 2010). As there were multiple independent variables, a multiple regression analysis was utilized. Multiple regression allows for the prediction of values of an outcome from several predictors. As this is a descriptive regression, there is no inference of causality, rather a description of the associations. Four separate multiple regression analyses were utilized to test the association between organizational culture and climate and the individual level factors. The data fit the requirement of linear regression in that the outcome variable must be of interval or ratio level and the predictor variable must be interval, ratio, or dichotomous. Tests were conducted to ensure that the data did not violate assumptions of the regression analysis including independence of the data, that the data are distributed normally, that the data are linear, homoscedastic, and that there is no multicollinearity.

To control for the type of degree a worker had, a dummy variable was created to compare those with social work degrees (the reference category; $n = 23$) to those with degrees that were related to social work (e.g. family and child development; $n = 41$), and those with non-related social work degrees (e.g. history; $n = 13$). As this was a descriptive regression analysis, and to control for the number of tests conducted, all variables were entered at once.

Climate. Organizational climate was measured through the Parker Climate Scale and the Leadership scale. The first regression analysis looked at the association between

the individual level factors and the Parker Climate Scale (Table 16). All variables were entered into one model. The model was significant ($F(9, 63) = 17.64$) and accounted for almost 70% of the variance ($R^2 = .68$). When holding each of the individual level factors constant, the model shows that job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.27$; $CI_{95} = 0.04, 0.34$) and positive affect ($\beta = 0.26$; $CI_{95} = 0.05, 0.36$) were positively associated with the Parker Climate scale while negative affect ($\beta = -0.28$; $CI_{95} = -0.40, -0.09$) was negatively associated. Comparing the standardized Beta's, we see that each of the three variables were similar in the strength of their association. The unstandardized coefficients indicate that negative affect had the largest association ($b = -0.24$) compared to positive affect ($b = 0.20$) and job satisfaction ($b = 0.19$). The confidence intervals tell us that with 95% confidence the coefficient will fall between the lower and upper bound. As will be seen in the other three models, the width of the confidence interval for the significant variables in the Parker Climate scale indicates the coefficients are more precise than compared to the other models. However, due to the small sample size, the confidence intervals indicate that, for, example with job satisfaction, the effect size may be very small (0.04) or more robust (0.34). This limitation prevents a more precise knowledge of the effect size of each variable's coefficient.

The regression analysis for the leadership variable was also significant ($F(9, 62) = 7.50$) and explained 45% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.45$). Both affect scales were significantly associated with the leadership scale. Negative affect was found to be negatively associated ($\beta = -0.33$; $CI_{95} = -0.75, -0.15$) and positive affect positively associated ($\beta =$

0.27; CI_{95} = 0.01, 0.64). In comparison of the unstandardized coefficients, the negative affect score appears to have a slightly stronger association (*b* = -0.45) with the scores on the leadership scale than did positive affect (*b* = 0.32). Comparing the standardized coefficients of the two climate scales, negative affect was found to have the strongest association.

The regression analyses for the two climate scales indicated similarities in the association with affect. Negative and positive affect were significantly associated with both scales. This means that higher scores on the negative affect scale were associated with lower scores on the climate scales and higher scores on the positive affect scale were associate with higher scores on the climate scales. In addition, job satisfaction was identified as a variable of interest in the Parker Climate analysis. In comparing the two climate models, the Parker Climate model accounts for over 20% more of the variance than the leadership model. However, as the confidence intervals are wide, especially for the leadership scale, determining a precise estimate of the effect size of the variables is a limitation.

Table 16

Standardized and Unstandardized Regression Coefficients for Parker Climate

	b	SE	β	*p*	CI_{95}	
(Constant)	2.75	0.67		0.00	1.41,	4.10
Non-Related Degree	0.07	0.12	0.05	0.55	-0.17,	0.32
Related Degree	0.10	0.09	0.09	0.29	-0.08,	0.28
Coping Strategies	0.06	0.06	0.09	0.33	-0.06,	0.17
Job Satisfaction	0.19	0.08	0.27	0.01	0.04,	0.34
Self-Efficacy	0.00	0.08	0.00	0.99	-0.16,	0.16
Job Stress	-0.05	0.07	-0.08	0.46	-0.20,	0.09
Burnout	-0.06	0.10	-0.07	0.54	-0.25,	0.13
Positive Affect	0.20	0.08	0.26	0.01	0.05,	0.36
Negative Affect	-0.24	0.08	-0.28	0.00	-0.40,	-0.09
R^2	0.68					
F	17.64			0.00		
N	72					

Table 17

Standardized and Unstandardized Regression Coefficients for Leadership

	b	SE	β	*p*	CI_{95}	
(Constant)	2.10	1.38		0.13	-0.66,	4.85
Non-Related Degree	0.26	0.24	0.12	0.29	-0.23,	0.75
Related Degree	0.14	0.18	0.08	0.46	-0.23,	0.51
Coping Strategies	0.11	0.12	0.11	0.34	-0.12,	0.35
Job satisfaction	0.24	0.15	0.22	0.13	-0.07,	0.54
Self-Efficacy	-0.09	0.16	-0.07	0.58	-0.42,	0.24
Job Stress	-0.17	0.15	-0.16	0.24	-0.47,	0.12
Burnout	0.25	0.20	0.19	0.20	-0.14,	0.64
Positive Affect	0.32	0.16	0.27	0.05	0.01,	0.64
Negative Affect	-0.45	0.15	-0.33	0.004	-0.75,	-0.15
R^2	0.45					
F	7.50			0.00		
N	71					

Culture. Organizational culture was measured through the Learning Culture scale and the Team Cohesion scale. The first regression analysis tested the association between the individual level factors and the Learning culture scale (Table 18). The model was significant ($F(9, 62) = 8.90$) and accounted for 50% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.50$). The control variable of having a related degree as compared to having a social work degree was significant (β = 0.28; CI_{95} = 0.14, 0.93), indicating that participants who had a degree related to social work were associated with higher scores on the learning culture scale. When holding each of the individual level factors constant, the model shows that coping strategies (β = 0.26; CI_{95} = 0.05, 0.56), positive affect (β = 0.30; CI_{95} = 0.06, 0.74), and job satisfaction (β = 0.29; CI^{95} = 0.03, 0.68) were positively associated with the Learning

culture scale. Comparing the unstandardized coefficients, positive affect has a slightly higher degree of importance in the model (b = 0.40) than job satisfaction (b = 0.36) or coping skills (b = 0.30), however again, the width of the confidence intervals raises a limitation regarding a determination of a precise effect size. For example, with positive affect, the coefficient may fall at 0.06, which would indicate a very weak association, or at 0.74, a strong association.

The regression analysis for the Team Cohesion found that although the model was significant ($F(9, 63) = 6.71$) there were no significant predictor variables (Table 19). The model did explain 42% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.42$). Job satisfaction and negative affect were found to be approaching significance. Theoretically, there is support for this finding in that organizational culture persists throughout time and is less dependent on individual perceptions and interpretations than is climate. Comparing the two culture models, the Learning Culture model explained about 10% more of the variance.

Table 18

Standardized and Unstandardized Regression Coefficients for Learning Culture

	b	SE	β	*p*	CI_{95}	
(Constant)	-0.12	1.47		0.94	-3.06,	2.82
Non-Related Degree	0.12	0.26	0.05	0.65	-0.40,	0.64
Related Degree	0.53	0.20	0.28	0.01	0.14,	0.93
Coping Strategies	0.30	0.13	0.26	0.02	0.05,	0.56
Job Satisfaction	0.36	0.16	0.30	0.03	0.03,	0.68
Self-Efficacy	-0.09	0.18	-0.06	0.60	-0.44,	0.26
Job Stress	-0.20	0.16	-0.16	0.22	-0.51,	0.12
Burnout	0.22	0.21	0.15	0.29	-0.19,	0.64
Positive Affect	0.40	0.17	0.30	0.02	0.06,	0.74
Negative Affect	-0.09	0.16	-0.06	0.56	-0.42,	0.23
R^2	0.50					
F	8.90			0.00		
N	71					

Table 19

Standardized and Unstandardized Regression Coefficients for Team Cohesion

	b	SE	B	*p*	CI_{95}	
(Constant)	1.86	1.25		0.14	-0.63,	4.36
Non-Related Degree	-0.05	0.23	-0.03	0.82	-0.50,	0.40
Related Degree	0.08	0.17	0.05	0.64	-0.26,	0.41
Coping Strategies	0.09	0.11	0.10	0.41	-0.13,	0.31
Job Satisfaction	0.25	0.14	0.26	0.08	-0.03,	0.53
Self-Efficacy	0.15	0.15	0.13	0.32	-0.15,	0.45
Job Stress	-0.06	0.14	-0.06	0.68	-0.32,	0.21
Burnout	-0.02	0.18	-0.02	0.92	-0.38,	0.34
Positive Affect	0.16	0.15	0.15	0.28	-0.13,	0.45
Negative Affect	-0.23	0.14	-0.19	0.10	-0.51,	0.05
R	0.42					
F	6.71			0.00		
N	72					

Analysis of Open-Ended Responses

As part of the COHA, the open-ended question: *Please share any other thoughts or information that would be helpful for us to know about the health and functioning of your organization*, was included. Twenty-five participants provided responses to the open-ended questions. The responses were brief, ranging from a few words to a short paragraph. The data was organized by participant, I first read all comments holistically to immerse myself in the details and took notes on key concepts that occurred to me (Creswell, 2013). To describe the data in detail, I developed categories from the themes that emerged from the data (Creswell, 2013).

The themes that emerged from the open-ended responses provided a fuller understanding of the survey data. The main themes identified were: Leadership factors; job stress; unit support; and optimism. The first two themes spoke to the challenges of the work, the second two described how workers adapted to those challenges. There was a balance in the open-ended responses between those remarks that demonstrated a level of frustration and those that were positive and hopeful about the job. Seven participants had a mix of both challenges and optimism weaved within their comments.

Leadership. Six of the participants spoke specifically to the leadership of the organization. Participants reported a sense of disconnect between the leadership and the frontline workers, a feeling of being unheard by leadership, and a need for additional support from leadership. One participant, when speaking of the perceived disconnect, wrote "There is minimal communication between upper management and caseworkers. Reasons for policy is not usually well explained." Another identified a gap between the "higher ups to the workers on the field." Participants expressed the desire feel heard and supported by leadership, as portrayed in one participants comment "It would be helpful as a frontline staff to see more support from the higher ups of this organization."

Job Stress. The stress of the job was the most frequent theme identified in the comments, with 9 participants referring to job stress. Job stress was often associated with the high work load. One participant remarked "It feels like there is no time for our unit to reflect or make improvements for the better because there is so much work to do." Participants also spoke of job stress in relation to the perception of CPS by the

community, the stress of the court system, and trying to balance work with family life. Job stress was connected in the comments to burnout and turnover. There was concern for the rate of turnover, and the stress the turnover causes due to increased workload.

Unit Support. Five participants commented on the support they found within their units, and the impact that support had on them. For example, one participant wrote "We discuss almost everything with each other and I think that helps keep us grounded and helps ease the frustrations of the job." Similarly, another respondent remarked "my unit is very cohesive which helps me do my job. There are enough employees with tenure that can answer questions as they come up." The support participants reported feeling that support from their unit provided for both an ease from job stress and an increase in feeling able to do their job.

Optimism. Feeling optimistic, or positive about the work despite the challenges was seen in six of the participant's comments. Participants indicated the importance of the work they do, their desire to help families, to reduce recidivism, and to improve outcomes. Regarding helping families and improving practice, one participant wrote "I like the movement that the Department is making in regards to the way they are thinking and reacting to cases lately. I feel there has been a shift…where we try things to establish permanency for our troubled teenagers that we may not have given a chance in the past." There was also an acknowledgement of the support from the agency. For example, one participant wrote "I do believe overall the agency has very good intentions of making the role of a caseworker better."

Organizational Level Findings

The four scales measuring organizational level functioning provide for a description of the overall organizational culture and climate of the region. The initial intention had also been to examine the culture and climate of each unit. As part of the survey, participants were asked to identify their unit number, with assurances that the unit numbers would be de-identified in all reporting of the data. Almost all participants listed their unit number (n = 68). There were 31 different units identified (excluding the two participants removed from the analysis). Of those 31 units, there were 12 units with one participant reporting, 9 with two participants, 6 units with three participants, and 5 of the identified units had four respondents.

As shown in Table 20 there was concern with the numbers of reporters for each unit as well as the lack of within group agreement for those units that had more than one respondent. Due to the small number in each group, the differences in scores were evaluated through standard deviations, in that the higher the deviation, the lower the group agreement. Research examining unit level culture and climate recommends that for analysis, each the unit must have at least 4 members, but that response rate of less than 80% has concerning validity for a mean score that is representative of the unit (UTCMHRC, 2006). It is difficult to know due to the turnover in the region how many workers were in each unit when the survey was administered, however it does not appear that an 80% response rate was achieved for any of the units and there were only four

units that had 4 participants. As a result of these concerns, the unit level data were not analyzed.

Table 20

Unit level scale data with 2 or more participants

De-identified Unit # and *n* for each unit		Leadership	Team Cohesion	Learning Culture	Parker Climate
Unit n = 2					
426	*M*	3.56	3.22	3.27	3.81
	M	3.78	3.89	4.00	3.84
	Unit *M*	3.67	3.56	3.64	3.83
	SD	0.16	0.47	0.51	0.02
916	*M*	3.67	3.44	2.82	3.69
	M	2.44	3.33	3.09	2.97
	M	3.06	3.39	2.95	3.33
	SD	0.86	0.08	0.19	0.51
764	*M*	3.44	3.33	1.73	3.45
	M	5.00	3.67	2.73	4.94
	Unit *M*	4.22	3.50	2.23	4.19
	SD	1.10	0.24	0.71	1.05
488	*M*	3.33	2.67	2.55	2.94
	M	4.00	3.33	3.09	3.34
	M	3.67	3.00	2.82	3.14
	SD	0.47	0.47	0.39	0.29
545	*M*	2.78	3.11	3.00	3.09
	M	2.67	3.78	2.91	3.84
	M	2.72	3.44	2.95	3.47
	SD	0.08	0.47	0.06	0.53
839	*M*	2.00	2.67	1.82	2.84
	M	5.00	4.11	3.36	4.22
	Unit *M*	3.50	3.39	2.59	3.53
	SD	2.12	1.02	1.09	0.97
234	*M*	2.89	2.11	1.36	2.84
	M	1.56	2.00	2.27	2.63
	M	2.22	2.06	1.82	2.73

	SD	0.94	0.08	0.64	0.15
105	*M*	2.67	3.89	2.18	3.50
	M	2.11	2.33	2.27	3.00
	Unit M	2.39	3.11	2.23	3.25
	SD	0.39	1.10	0.06	0.35
443	*M*	4.00	3.67	2.73	3.63
	M	5.00	3.89	4.36	4.56
	Unit *M*	4.50	3.78	3.55	4.09
	SD	0.71	0.16	1.16	0.66

Unit n = 3		Leadership	Team Cohesion	Learning Culture	Parker Climate
257	*M*	2.67	3.00	3.00	3.00
	M	2.78	3.78	2.36	3.13
	M	4.56	3.00	4.18	3.22
	Unit *M*	3.33	3.26	3.18	3.11
	SD	1.06	0.45	0.92	0.11
814	*M*	3.44	3.56	2.64	3.47
	M	2.56	3.67	1.64	3.44
	M	4.11	4.11	4.36	3.81
	Unit *M*	3.37	3.78	2.88	3.57
	SD	0.78	0.29	1.38	0.21
574	*M*	4.33	3.89	3.91	4.03
	M	2.33	3.00	3.00	3.03
	M	1.67	2.22	2.55	2.84
	M	4.00	3.00	3.73	3.84
	Unit *M*	3.08	3.03	3.30	3.44
	SD	1.29	0.68	0.64	0.59
450	*M*	3.67	4.78	4.45	4.53
	M	4.11	4.11	4.77	4.00
	M	3.00	3.67	3.00	3.28
	Unit *M*	3.59	4.19	4.07	3.94
	SD	0.56	0.56	0.94	0.63
206	*M*	3.56	4.78	4.91	3.75
	M	3.56	3.22	2.45	3.56
	M	2.67	3.89	3.18	3.50
	Unit *M*	3.26	3.96	3.52	3.60
	SD	0.51	0.78	1.26	0.13
430	*M*	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
	M	3.44	3.00	2.91	2.72

	M	3.67	3.56	3.82	3.84
	Unit *M*	3.37	3.19	3.24	3.19
	SD	0.34	0.32	0.50	0.59
269	*M*	2.22	1.00	1.00	2.44
	M	3.00	2.00	3.00	2.53
	M	2.44	2.33	1.55	2.72
	Unit *M*	2.56	1.78	1.85	2.56
	SD	0.40	0.69	1.03	0.14

Unit n = 4		Leadership	Team Cohesion	Learning Culture	Parker Climate
576	*M*	4.00	3.56	4.27	3.56
	M	2.89	3.56	3.00	3.47
	M	3.44	3.33	2.09	3.59
	M	3.33	3.78	3.18	3.41
	Unit *M*	3.42	3.56	3.14	3.51
	SD	0.46	0.18	0.90	0.09
966	*M*	2.44	4.33	1.91	3.06
	M	2.22	5.00	4.55	4.00
	M	1.56	3.44	1.36	2.72
	M	4.11	4.22	4.64	4.22
	Unit *M*	2.58	4.25	3.11	3.50
	SD	1.09	0.64	1.72	0.72
986	*M*	3.00	3.44	2.36	3.59
	M	3.00	3.22	2.27	3.34
	M	3.78	3.78	3.45	3.59
	M	4.00	3.89	4.00	3.82
	Unit *M*	3.44	3.58	3.02	3.59
	SD	0.52	0.31	0.84	0.19
876	*M*	4.00	3.00	2.91	3.00
	M	2.00	2.78	2.00	2.88
	M	4.00	3.89	2.82	3.84
	M	4.11	5.00	4.73	4.47
	Unit M	3.53	3.67	3.11	3.55
	SD	1.02	1.01	1.15	0.75

Regional Culture and Climate

Taking a closer look at the scales identified to measure the culture and climate of the organization allows for a regional examination of strengths and areas of growth for the region. Table 21 provides a condensed comparison of mean scores between the sample from this study and the test sample. As noted previously, most of the scales in this sample had similar, but slightly lower, mean scores than the Butler sample. There were two subscales on the Parker climate scale that had higher average scores than the tested Butler samples and are an ideal place to start speaking to the strengths of the region.

Table 21

Regional culture and climate mean scores compared to test sample

Scale (Current Study)	*M*(SD)	Scale (Butler Test Sample)	*M*(SD)
Learning Culture	3.10(0.93)	Learning Culture	3.08(0.80)
Team Cohesion	3.42(0.76)	Team Cohesion	3.61(0.71)
Leadership	3.32(0.83)	Leadership	3.40(0.80)
Parker Climate Scale	3.43(0.55)	Parker Climate Scale	3.49(0.54)
Clarity	3.66(0.65)	Clarity	3.74(0.73)
Conflict	2.83(0.74)	Conflict	3.03(0.85)
Importance	4.05(0.62)	Importance	4.20(0.57)
Autonomy	3.30(0.79)	Autonomy	3.32(0.56)
Challenge	4.11(0.64)	Challenge	4.22(0.56)
Innovation	3.33(0.83)	Innovation	3.27(0.84)
Justice	3.33(0.85)	Justice	3.19(0.89)
Support	2.87(0.91)	Support	3.01(0.99)

(COHA, 2016)

Participants in this sample rated perceptions of Justice and Innovation slightly higher than the test sample. The construct of justice, as measured in the scale, primarily examines how decisions are made about one's job. For example, participants are asked to

respond to the questions: *Before decisions about my job are made, all of my concerns are heard, and Decisions about my job are made in a fair manner.* Innovation looks at how supportive an organization is to developing and implementing new ideas. Example questions are: *I am encouraged to develop my ideas and My organization encourages me to improve on my boss's methods.* For both of these questions participants indicate their level of agreement to the statement, 1 being disagree and 5 being strongly agree. Workers in this study agreed most often with the subscales indicating feeling a sense of justice in decision making and in perceiving that there is support for ideas aimed to improve practice.

Overall, the Parker Climate Scale had the highest mean score, however the Team Cohesion scale had an almost identical mean score. The questions on the team cohesion scale examine perceptions of collaboration and team work within an agency through questions such as: *Working with members of this unit, my unique skills and talents are valued and utilized.* The higher mean score on the Team Cohesion scale was supported in the open-ended responses. As participants indicated that the support they received within their unit enabled them to both cope with the challenges and improve their performance.

The learning culture scale provides for a conflicted analysis. This scale evaluates the worker's perception of how learning activities are promoted and encouraged (COHA, 2016). The mean score for this sample was higher than in the tested sample, however was the lowest of the mean scores for the region. The responses on the learning culture scale are worded differently than the other scales, asking for the amount of time a certain event

occurs, such as how often staff strategize ways to improve practice, making for a direct comparison between the mean scores not as clear.

There were 3 responses on the open-ended questions that spoke directly to the learning culture of the organization that may assist in corroborating the scale data and interpreting the lower mean score. One participant wrote, “When new things come up there is no space to learn.” Having an environment that is supportive of and creates opportunity to learn is essential to a learning culture. Similarly, another participant remarked, “when training is required, it takes time away from work and is more stressful.” A respondent also commented on a change in the education requirements for caseworkers stating, “Education requirements for caseworkers have been lowered to associate-degree level. This worries me about the quality of caseworkers that will be coming in and whether this will ultimately create more problems.” Although this comment does not speak specifically to the questions on the learning culture scale, it demonstrates the value the participant sees the organization placing on education.

The scores on the leadership scale indicate a potential area of growth for the region. The leadership scale had the second lowest mean score for this sample, and was lower than the Butler tested mean score. The leadership scale aims to examine the leadership practices within the organization through questions such as *Leaders at my agency clearly communicate links between agency vision and work unit goals* and *Leaders at my agency treat staff with courtesy, sensitivity, and respect.* “Leader” was defined to participants as anyone above the supervisor level such as middle managers and

county and state administrators or directors. The findings on the leadership scale may be further explored through themes identified in the open-ended responses. In the responses participants spoke to the need for additional support from agency leadership, a desire for more direct communication, and wanting to be heard – all concepts similar to those measured in the scale.

Limitations

Use of a non-experimental design such as a correlation design has limitations. I cannot make causal inferences regarding which variable predicts another, or determine if there are alternative explanations (Shadish et al., 2002). Unfortunately, an experimental design was not feasible. First, there was not an ethical way to have a control group, as this would be either a unit that is purposely exposed to negative culture and climate, or a unit that does not strive to establish permanency for children. Second, when considering a longitudinal study involving child welfare workers, there is concern for an increased amount of attrition because of the high turnover rate of the child welfare workforce (Fowler, 2009).

A correlation design also limits the ability to infer that organizational factors antecede individual factors or direct client outcomes (Shadish et al., 2002). Although there is support for the idea that studying individuals in a real word setting rather than experimentally designed settings increases the applicability of findings (Rubin & Babbie, 2008), using a correlation design and cross-sectional data means that causal inferences are not justified (Rubin & Babbie, 2008). The threat to internal validity that was gravest

in this study was the inability to control for external factors that may impact the child welfare workforce. Theoretically, this concept is reflected in the chronosystem. The sampling plan was designed to minimize this threat. Restricting the population to one region limits differences inherent between regions, leadership, and court systems. These factors assisted in limiting confounding external variables that cannot be controlled for, however, limitations still exist.

Moving beyond internal validity, there were also limitations regarding external validity in this study. As I used convenience sampling, there are limits to the ability to generalize the findings (Rubin & Babbie, 2008). There were concerns regarding feasibility of recruitment due to the demanding workload of child welfare workers. It was anticipated that some of the workforce would be eager to have their voices heard and thus be willing to spend time participating in the study, however, others may not have been as motivated. Incentives were provided to all participants to reduce this limitation. However, the response rate in some units was quite small. This limitation did present a barrier to analyzing the unit-level data as there were not enough unit members who responded from any one unit to have an adequate response rate allowing for these comparisons.

There was a measure in place to maintain the fidelity to the sample frame (asking participants to list their job title) to reduce the limitation of sampling individuals who were not intended for inclusion, however due to self-report, there was no way to fully ensure this. Sampling bias may present as a limitation. Due to the convenience sampling, it is unknown if the sample in this study is representative of the entire region (Rubin &

Babbie, 2008). There is the chance that the sample was overly represented of individuals who were, for example, dissatisfied with their regional culture or climate, or vice versa. However, the similarity of the psychometric properties in the sample from this dissertation (means, standard deviations, and internal consistency scores) to that of the tested child welfare population reduces concern for sampling bias. In comparing the properties, the scores are similar, indicating consistency with the measurement in the dissertation sample. In addition, social desirability may also be a limitation in this study (Rubin & Babbie, 2008). Participants were asked to report on their leadership and organization. Despite assurances of confidentiality, participants may have reported more favorably due to concern they may be identified.

The decision was made to limit the study to one region due to both limited resources and because of the inability to control for confounding variables that vary across the state. Thus, tentative conclusions cannot be generalized to other child welfare workers beyond the Regional sample. A strength was that this researcher was able to have access to the entire Regions apparent population, allowing for the findings to provide specific guidance to the area.

Discussion

Supporting the child welfare workforce through strengthening and enhancing the organizational culture and climate plays an instrumental role in increasing job satisfaction (Baltes, Zhdanova, & Parker, 2009; Glisson, Green, & Williams, 2012), creating a more stable workforce through decreasing intent to leave (Ellett, 2008; Fernandes, 2016; Shim,

2010; Smith, 2004; Westbrook, Ellett, & Asberg, 2012), and ultimately can improve outcomes for children, youth, and families involved in the system (Glisson & Green, 2011; Williams & Glisson, 2013). The research on organizational culture and climate presented in this dissertation provides strategies for organizations to improve their functioning. This study contributes distinctively to this literature base by identifying how individual-level factors interact with perceptions of culture and climate, a needed addition to child welfare organizational research as described by Ellett (2008):

> …any comprehensive theory of strengthening organizational holding power…and subsequently employee retention in child welfare, needs to accommodate personal characteristics of employees such as human caring and self-efficacy, and perhaps other personal characteristics as well (p. 85).

Through an ecological systems theory lens, this study advanced the understanding of the interactions between systems, accounting for personal characteristics on the micro level, system interactions that create the organizational climate on the exo and meso levels and the overall macro level of the organizational culture. Additionally, the chrono system provided for plausible limitations of interpreting the data including understanding potential external factors that may have influenced the participants' responses to the survey as well as the outcome data.

The first hypothesis, that there is an association between the individual level factors and how one perceives their organizational culture and climate tested the exchanges, linkages, and processes between the systems. The correlation analysis

provided initial support for this hypothesis. The correlation coefficients indicated there was a medium to large association between the individual-level variables and the culture and climate variables. This finding points to the importance of supporting the workforce at the micro and macro levels while remaining aware of the interactions occurring in the meso and exo systems. Lau and Ng (2014) stressed the importance of assessing all systems when attempting to understand the macro level functioning in relation to evaluating training programs. In addition, examining transfer students within higher education, the micro, meso, and exo level system were found to interact with the functioning on the macro system (Poch, 2005). In this study, findings suggest that at the micro level workers who indicate higher levels of job stress and burnout are more likely to have more negative perceptions of their macro level organizational culture than workers who report lower levels of burnout and job stress.

Examining the individual-level factors through a regression analysis allowed for a deeper understanding of how the individual-level factors interact with the organizational level factors as individual predictor variables. The demographic characteristic of type of degree was only significantly associated with one model, in that individuals with degrees that were related to social work were associated with higher scores on the learning culture scale than were participants with social work or non-related degrees.

The regression analysis underscored the strength of the association that was identified in the correlation analysis between affect and organizational culture and climate. Positive affect was a significant predictor on 3 of the 4 regression models, and

negative affect a significant predictor on 2 of the models, and was approaching significance on the Team Cohesion model. This emphasis on the importance of evaluating individual affect is highlighted in both organizational and emotion research.

Fisher (2002) stresses the importance of incorporating affective reactions to work, indicating that based on the Affective Events Theory (AET), that individuals with greater negative affect are more likely to express more negative feelings about work whereas the individuals with higher levels of positive affect are more likely to express more positive reactions. In relation to job satisfaction, Kafetsios and Zampetakis (2007) also found support for the role of affect, finding that positive affect was associated positively with job satisfaction and negative affect was associated negatively with job satisfaction. Using the PANAS, Herrbach (2006) found that "affective commitment is correlated with experiencing more frequent positive affect in the workplace, above and beyond the influence of dispositional tendencies" (p. 638), in that experiencing positive affect at work at higher frequencies was related to affective organizational commitment.

Coping strategies were also identified as a significant predictor variable with regard to learning culture. Considering the potential exposure to vicarious trauma within the child welfare workforce, establishing coping strategies are essential to support child welfare workers (Jankoski, 2010; Milddleton & Potter, 2015). The link between coping strategies and learning culture is not well established in the literature. However, considering a learning culture is one that involves support, and a proactive approach by leadership to learning (Senge, 1990), individuals who identify that their organization is

one that is a supportive learning culture may have greater access to learning coping skills, and greater support to use those coping skills. Jankoski (2010) reinforces the need to provide child welfare workers the opportunity to learning coping skills in the statement: "Organizations must make staff training….a priority and provide an open and safe forum for staff members to discuss emotional and demanding stress" and that "supervisors must be required to undergo specialized training to recognize VT…Every aspect of their training must have a trauma focus" (p.117). Creating an atmosphere supportive of identifying vicarious trauma and developing coping skills was reinforced by Middleton and Potter (2015) who found that there is a potential for symptoms of vicarious trauma to spread within an organization and that interventions should target supervisors and peer mentors "as a means of mitigating the impact of vicarious trauma" (p. 209).

Finally, job satisfaction was found to be of importance in relation to the Parker climate scale, and both culture scales. Strand and Dore (2008) stressed the implications of job satisfaction in relation to a stable workforce, finding that job satisfaction is significantly related to supervision, access to resources, working conditions, and internal supports. Barth et al., (2008) also found that quality supervision was positively and strongly associated with worker satisfaction. The connection between job satisfaction and supervision was reinforced by Chen and Scannapieco (2010), who found that child welfare workers who were more satisfied with their jobs and with the support they received from their supervisors were more likely to retain their position. The regression findings provide for additional understanding as to the association between each of the

significant individual-level factors and the organizational level variables and provide for a new appreciation of the influence of individual affect.

Considering the meso system and the exo systems, the open-ended responses provide for an analysis of the functioning of these exchanges between systems. On the meso level (the interactions between the micro systems) the descriptions of the value of team work and inner-unit support signify how healthy, functioning meso-level interactions can support individual case workers. The participants spoke to the helpfulness of senior workers being available in a unit to answer questions, and of the comradery and support between unit members to cope with the challenges of the job. The interactions occurring in the exoystem, those interactions that impact the individual worker (the micro system) without their involvement, were identified by participants in the comments regarding leadership. The expressed feeling of being unheard by leadership, and the feeling that there is a gap between the upper administration and the front-line case worker speak to the impact the decisions occurring in the exosystem have on the individual worker.

The analysis of the organizational culture and climate scales provided for a macro-level examination of the regional functioning. This analysis identified several strengths in the region, including participants indicating higher perceptions of fair decision-making and the ability to be innovative in their job. In addition, the participants indicated at higher rates than other scales that there was an understood direction for teamwork within the region. The regional analysis provided for some direction as to areas

of potential growth such as increasing the connection and communication between upper leadership and the frontline workers, and for creating a more supportive learning culture.

This study had set out to examine the association between the organizational culture and climate of each unit and permanency outcomes for children in out-of-home care; but was unable to conduct the linking of outcomes due to limitations associated with the sample size and within group agreement. There was one additional study identified that encountered the limitation of achieving the needed response rate (Stein, 2010); it is possible there are more that have not been published. There are also conflicting findings that have emerged regarding linking organizational culture and climate to outcomes, particularly the study by Silver Wolf (2013) as previously described. Linking organizational culture and climate to direct outcomes is important and emerging research, and as this study demonstrates, there is work needed to establish effective ways to study this phenomenon.

CHAPTER 5

IMPLICATIONS

This study offers implications for practice and policy regarding ways child welfare organizations can develop work environments that support front-line workers. Previous implications drawn from child welfare organizational studies include recommendations for workers to have greater flexibility and involvement in their decision making (Glisson, Green, & Williams, 2012), the need for organizational level evidence-based strategies to improve climate and culture (Glisson & Green, 2011), and the necessity to train case workers to understand the unique needs of clients and enable them to be available and responsive to their clientele (Glisson, 2010). Prior studies have also addressed burnout and job stress (Boyas, et al., 2012; Travis et al. 2016), job satisfaction (Barth, 2008; Strand & Dore, 2008), self-efficacy (Chen & Scannapieco, 2009; Collin-Camargo & Royse, 2010; Ellett, 2008), and coping skills (Anderson, 2000; Jankoski, 2010) in the child welfare workforce. This study both provides additional evidence to support previous findings and implications and contributes new implications through a distinctive look at how individual-level factors impact one's perception of their organization. Specifically, this study has identified the importance of individual affect, a distinguishing addition to child welfare workforce research.

Affect

Including the variable of affect through the PANAS is a unique contribution to the child welfare literature. This study provided for evidence to expand this line of research,

including an opportunity to expand analysis to look at potential interaction effects between affect and the other individual-level factors such as burnout. Research studying the impact of individual affect on the perception of culture and climate within child welfare organizations is lacking. There is precedence in the organizational research literature identifying the importance of emotions and affective states in the workplace (e.g. Ashforth & Humphry, 1995; Barsade & Gibson, 2014; Gaudine & Thorne, 2001; Herrbach, 2006; Judge & Larsen, 2001; Kafetsios & Zampetakis, 2008; Straw & Barsade, 1993; Testa, 2001; Weiss, 2002; Wijewardena, Härtel, & Samaratunge, 2010). In addition, there is literature acknowledging the emotional work that social work can entail (Miller, Considine & Garner, 2007), emotional work is occurring when "emotion is a central focus of work" and requires authentic emotions (Miller et al., 2007, p. 234).

Social work is seen as demanding and requiring one's full emotional presence (Ikebuchi & Rasmussen, 2014). However, social workers are at times discouraged from talking about the emotions and feelings brought on by the work they do (Morrison, 1990). There are also findings that the discussion of emotion in social work education is minimal and students are not adequately prepared to deal with the emotional work their future careers demand (Ikebuchi & Rasmussen, 2014). Although there is awareness of the emotional work of social work, and the importance of studying affect and emotion is well-established in the organizational research, there is minimal research assessing the role of affect in social work. There was one recent study that incorporated affect through observations of mental health providers who were asked to participate in a study using

the OSC measure (Beidas et al., 2014). The researchers observed the participants as they completed the OSC in person and found that those participants who rated their agencies with poorer organizational social context displayed more affect such as sighing or grimacing (Beidas et al., 2014).

This study found that affect is associated with one's perception of his/her organizational culture and climate. There is a limitation to understanding antecedence, if affect causes how one perceives their work environment, or if the work environment causes the affective state. Emotions are found to be dependent on an event, in that an emotion occurs due to an either internal or external stimuli (Wijewardena et al., 2010), whereas dispositional affect is characterized by an individual's average level of an emotion (Judge & Larsen, 2001), and is thus more stable over time. This study focused on the association rather than attempting to determine causation. It was of interest however that individuals in the same unit reported different levels of positive and negative affect.

The findings from this study highlight the influential role affect plays in one's perception of organizational culture and climate and provides for implications for hiring, training, mentoring, and supervision. Affect was significantly associated with 3 of the 4 organizational-level scales, was approaching significance with the fourth, and was the only significant association on the leadership scale. This finding is consistent with the literature that identifies affect as an important predictor to consider when evaluating the work environment.

Hiring. Considerations for hiring within the child welfare workforce is of utmost importance. State child welfare agencies are advised to take great efforts to hire individuals whom are deemed to be a fit for the difficult position (Harbert, Dudley, & Erbes, 2009). To improve efforts to identify workers who will be a good fit, for example, some agencies use realistic job videos that are required viewing, engage in competency-based hiring; and test applicants' case management skills (Harbert et al., 2009). The attempt to reduce turnover thus starts by hiring individuals who are identified as more likely to stay at the agency. Accordingly, understanding the role of individual affect in organizations through both the existing literature and the findings from this study, it is plausible to make considerations for affect in hiring.

Literature regarding affect and performance finds that positive affect, including mood and disposition, is linked with increased performance (Barsade & Gibson, 2007; Straw & Barsade, 1993). Contributing to this are the findings that individuals with positive affect are less likely to be absent and are more likely to go beyond their job expectations, including providing superior customer service, compared to individuals with negative affect (Barsade & Gibson, 2007). Studies have linked both positive and negative affect to effective decision making (Barsade & Gibson, 2007). Positive affect can lead to more creative problem solving (Morrison, 2007; Straw & Barsade, 1993) through flexible and efficient processing of new information (Barsade & Gibson, 2007). Individuals with higher levels of positive affect have been found to make more accurate

decisions (Straw & Barsade, 1993) while negative affect may provide for more systematic decision making (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996).

Understanding the role affect has on organizational and individual outcomes leads to the premise that it may be worthwhile to train hiring panels to identify candidates' affective states. For example, one of the competencies included in hiring child welfare workers in Maine is motivation, defined as "emotional tendencies that guide or facilitate reaching goals" (Harbert et al., 2009, p.14). In addition, in their review of literature linking happiness to career success, Boehm and Lyubomirsky (2008) found that individuals with higher positive affect received requests for follow-up interviews more frequently than individuals with lower positive affect and that "happy people are less likely to lose their jobs and to be unemployed than less happy people" (p. 107). Positive affect is not simply happiness; an individual expressing positive affect is one that is alert, engaged, enthusiastic, and attentive (Watson et al., 1988). Potential ways to identify candidates who exhibit higher levels of positive affect are remaining aware of those candidates who speak positively of both the child welfare workforce as well as the families they will be working with, those who express excitement and appear attentive and candidates that are enthusiastic about the work they are applying for. There should, however, be caution when considering cultural differences in assessing one's affective state, and affect should only be one consideration of many important competencies necessary to evaluate for in interviews for child welfare work.

Training and Mentoring. According to the Child Welfare Information Gateway, the training of the child welfare workforce is critical to achieve improved outcomes and to increase retention (CWIG – Training, n.d.). Identifying trainers and mentors who can successfully educate, build skills, and support child welfare staff is essential. Regarding affect, implications for training and mentoring may reflect the concept of emotional contagion. Emotional contagion is the notion that emotions can be transferred or passed from one individual to another (Ashforth & Humprey, 1995; Barsade & Gibson, 2007).

Emotional contagion can be both positive and negative. Individuals exposed to positive emotions or affect can feel uplifted and when extended, aid in developing resiliency (Wijewardena, 2010). Positivity can also increase a sense of cohesiveness and empathy (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995). Emotional contagion can be negative as well, however, creating anxiety lowering performance, and increasing conflict within groups (Ashforth & Humphry, 1995). In addition, being exposed to negative emotion may cause avoidance in those exposed (Wijewardena, 2010). The concept that emotions can be transmitted indicates that when hiring trainers or appointing mentors the affective state of that individual should be taken into account.

Additionally, mentoring relationships can provide for vital emotional support (Waldron, 2010). For example, when leading a team of mentees or a group of trainees, the mentor or trainer may need to have the ability to shift, or lighten the mood of the group (Waldron, 2010). This is particularly applicable to child welfare work where workers can become discouraged or frustrated by the work. Trainers and mentors can also

aid in helping those they train and mentor understand and articulate the emotions they experience as part of the work (Waldron, 2010). Therefore, trainers and mentors must remain aware of their emotional or affective state in regard to emotional contagion, while supporting the trainees and mentees in dealing with their own emotions.

Supervision. Affect in supervision is seen in two distinct ways, first the affective state of the supervisor, and second, the affect of the case worker. The description regarding emotional contagion applies also to supervisors, as there is support for the idea that leaders who demonstrate positive levels of affect have followers who will also have more positive affect (Wijewardena, 2010). Barsade and Gipson (2007) speak to the necessity for leaders to regulate their own emotions and maintain a positive outlook while helping to manage the emotions of their staff. Transformational leaders harness employee's emotions by evoking, framing and mobilizing them to increase motivation (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995) and inspire their followers (Waldron, 2010). Through transformational leadership, leaders increase individual employees' intrinsic value, and emphasize organizational goals above self-identity, transformational leaders connect individual employees to the organization, fostering greater organizational commitment (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995). Additionally, managers who increase the frequency of events that cause positive feelings are more successful in creating commitment than those who attempt to reduce negative events (Fisher, 2002).

Research into supervision in social work finds that supportive supervisors motivate, reassure and encourage workers so that workers feel more at ease with their

work and are thus able to be more effective. Their workers demonstrate decreased stress levels and higher levels of commitment to the organization (Kadushin & Harkness 2014). Supportive child welfare supervisors also help workers manage their emotions. It can be a source of stress when workers feel they need to control or hide their emotions in order to be professional or socially acceptable.

The findings from this study regarding affect have underscored the value of considering affect as an important aspect of organizational culture and climate. In addition, the literature supports the importance of considering affect in hiring, training, and supervision. As Barsade and Gipson (2007) state: "affect matters because employees are not isolated 'emotional islands.' Rather, they bring all of themselves to work, including their traits, moods, and emotions…" (p. 54).

Future Directions

With regard to the second research question, regarding the functioning of units that produce high permanency outcomes, this study produced unanticipated implications for future research. First, there is the concept of timely permanency. I realized when analyzing the permanency data that how long a child has been in care does not necessarily correlate with the efficacy of the outcome decision. It is necessary to have a way of measuring whether the permanency decision, despite the timeframe it was made in, was in the best interest of the child's well-being. Such measurement and analysis must include assessment of recidivism. This may best be measured through in-depth case reviews, with time to permanency as one of multiple measurement points. Second,

utilizing a measurement administered online did not provide for a sufficient sample size. The value of this research could be extended in the future with the inclusion of larger samples. Third, there is a need to critically examine if a quantitative measure can sufficiently evaluate organizational culture and climate.

Discovering if there is a relationship between organizational factors and permanency outcomes can provide for an untapped resource to assist in guiding child welfare agencies and future research in improving permanency outcomes for children. In a field that is overwhelmed by the number of children in care, having potential solutions to not only achieving improved outcomes for children but also for decreasing workload is essential. Future research should continue to identify research designs and methodology that can adequately measure this linkage.

This study allowed for a macro-level regional assessment of the agency's organizational culture and climate, providing implications for specific directions the agency can take to strengthen its culture and climate. Assessing regional differences in culture and climate may identify strengths child welfare agencies can benefit from. Understanding the association between individual-level factors and perception of culture and climate has implications for future research. Although there is established research in the child welfare literature on the factors of job satisfaction (e.g.: Barth et al., 2008; Strand & Dore, 2008), job stress (e.g.: Boyas et al., 2011; Travis et al., 2015), burnout (e.g.: Lizano & Barak, 2012; Travis et al., 2015) coping strategies (e.g.: Anderson, 1999), and self-efficacy (e.g.: Ellett, 2008; DePanfilis & Zlotnik, 2007), there is minimal

research examining how these variables effect the perception of culture and climate. Due to the limitations of this study, including the small sample size, replication of the findings is essential to understanding the relationships.

Understanding the role of affect provides for the greatest untapped field of research related to individual-level factors. There is a scarcity of child welfare research that involves individual affect. The abundant organizational literature, in conjunction with the findings from this study, indicate that this could be a promising addition to child welfare workforce research, including potential implications for retention. This study provided for an initial examination into understanding what individual factors impact a child welfare worker's perception of their organizational culture and climate. In addition, the regional data analysis allowed for a view into the macro level functioning of the organization. Understanding that the child welfare workforce is comprised of different levels of systems, and that the interactions between those systems impact individual workers and potentially direct client outcomes allows for an innovate examination of organizational culture and climate research within child welfare agencies.

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APPENDIX A

INDIVIDUAL LEVEL VARIABLES

Individual Level Variables

Measure		*N*	*M*	*SD*
Copenhagen Burnout				
Personal	How often do you feel tired?	77	4.00	0.73
	How often are you physically exhausted?	77	3.62	0.84
	How often are you emotionally exhausted?	77	3.86	0.88
	How often do you think: "I can't take it anymore"?	77	3.03	1.03
	How often do you feel worn out?	77	3.77	0.81
	How often do you feel weak and susceptible to illness?	77	2.79	1.00
Work Related	Is your work emotionally exhausting?	77	4.05	0.90
	Do you feel burnt out because of your work?	77	3.49	1.05
	Does your work frustrate you?	77	3.61	0.86
	Do you feel worn out at the end of the working day?	76	3.87	0.85
	Are you exhausted in the morning at the thought of another day at work?	77	3.23	1.06
	Do you feel that every working hour is tiring for you?	77	2.79	1.04
	Do you have enough energy for family and friends during leisure time? (Reverse Coded)	76	2.83	1.00
Client Related	Do you find it hard to work with clients?	77	2.57	0.80
	Do you find it frustrating to work with clients?	77	2.75	0.80
	Does it drain your energy to work with clients?	77	2.94	0.92
	Do you feel that you give more than you get back when you work with clients?	77	3.42	0.92
	Are you tired of working with clients?	77	2.27	1.07
	Do you sometimes wonder how long you will be able to continue working with clients?	76	2.62	1.15

		N	M	SD
Coping Strategies				
	I understand my exposure to the effects of vicarious trauma.	74	3.58	1.05
	I practice physical self-care (e.g., sleep, rest, exercise, nutrition, etc.).	76	2.99	1.08
	I have a diverse network outside of work for social support.	76	3.54	1.19
	I use support available through my child welfare agency (e.g., supervision, colleagues, debriefing, education, and training).	76	2.95	1.30
	I have a work-to-home transition plan that I participate in as part of my self-care.	76	2.55	1.30
	I have a clear self-care plan.	76	2.74	1.26
	I have made my supervisor aware of my self-care plan.	76	2.11	1.34
	I feel supported by my supervisor in my self-care plan.	74	3.00	1.54
	I work on staying present with friends or family as part of my self-care.	76	3.45	1.34
	I try to take regular breaks during the work day as part of my self-care.	76	2.59	1.29
	I use humor as a coping tool.	76	3.86	1.08
	I debrief with colleagues as part of my self-care.	76	3.63	1.15
	I pay attention to the physical responses I experience when I am exposed to trauma situations.	76	3.17	1.25
	I participate in activities or hobbies that restore my energy.	76	2.93	1.32
	I practice religious or spiritual renewal as part of my self-care.	76	2.82	1.60
Job Satisfaction				
	My job fits my career goals.	76	3.78	0.79
	In my work, I have a feeling of success and accomplishment.	76	3.58	1.02

	My work has the right level of challenge.	76	3.43	1.06
	All in all, I am satisfied with my job.	76	3.45	1.01
	I feel appreciated for the work that I do.	76	2.88	1.21
	I like the people that I work with.	76	4.20	0.80
Self-Efficacy				
	I have the skills that I need to do my job effectively.	76	3.93	0.74
	I consistently plan ahead and then carry out my plans.	76	3.62	0.91
	I usually accomplish whatever I set my mind to.	76	4.09	0.73
	I am effective and confident in doing my job.	76	3.99	0.81
	I have been effective in my work here.	76	3.96	0.74
Job Stress				
	I have too many pressures to do my job effectively.	76	3.61	0.99
	The workers in my unit often show signs of stress and strain.	76	4.07	0.88
	I feel a lot of stress here.	76	3.82	0.99
	The heavy workload reduces staff effectiveness.	76	4.28	0.84
	Staff frustration is common here.	76	4.16	0.88
Positive Affect				
	Interested	73	3.64	0.84
	Excited	73	2.77	0.89
	Strong	73	2.99	0.89
	Alert	73	3.56	0.85
	Inspired	73	3.00	1.01
	Determined	73	3.79	0.96
	Attentive	73	3.71	0.84
	Enthusiastic	73	3.08	0.94
	Proud	73	3.15	1.04
	Active	73	3.40	0.98
Negative Affect				
	Distressed	73	3.07	1.02
	Upset	73	2.62	0.94
	Guilty	73	1.74	0.97

Scared	73	1.85	0.91
Hostile	73	1.48	0.73
Irritable	73	2.52	1.06
Ashamed	73	1.37	0.72
Nervous	73	2.48	1.03
Jittery	73	1.93	1.13
Afraid	73	1.67	0.87

APPENDIX B

ORGANIZATIONAL LEVEL VARIABLES

Organizational Level Variables

Measurement		*N*	*M*	*SD*
Leadership				
	Leaders at my agency give people the right amount of freedom and choice in determining how to do their work.	75	3.19	1.19
	Leaders at my agency encourage new ideas and innovations.	75	3.19	1.17
	Leaders at my agency clearly communicate links between agency vision and work unit goals.	75	3.15	1.09
	Leaders at my agency manage and resolve conflicts and disagreements in a constructive manner.	75	3.23	0.97
	Leaders at my agency foster an inclusive environment that values all types of diversity and opinions.	74	3.34	0.97
	Leaders at my agency hold staff accountable for high quality, timely, and cost-effective results.	75	3.53	0.94
	Leaders at my agency behave in an honest, fair, and ethical manner.	75	3.56	0.84
	Leaders at my agency communicate effectively with all levels of staff through various methods (oral presentations, written documents, etc.)	75	3.12	1.13
	Leaders at my agency treat staff with courtesy, sensitivity, and respect.	75	3.48	0.89
Learning Culture				
	Staff discuss new evidence-based practice.	75	2.75	1.14
	Staff look for new and better ways to meet the needs of families.	75	3.20	1.15
	Staff share learning from conferences and trainings with others in the agency.	74	3.23	1.08

	Staff take the time to reflect about the work.	74	2.91	1.17
	Staff strategize ways to improve practice.	75	2.99	1.11
	Staff seek opportunities to learn new approaches.	75	2.96	1.05
	Staff seek feedback from others about how to improve job performance.	75	3.15	1.04
	Staff are encouraged to share feedback about how agency practice could be improved.	75	3.05	1.22
	Staff feel comfortable sharing their challenges with supervisors.	75	3.44	1.12
	Supervisors and managers are open to feedback about how things can be improved in our agency.	75	3.31	1.13
	Staff use data to make decisions.	75	3.05	1.29
	Descriptive Statistics			
Parker Climate				
Clarity	It is often not clear who has authority to make decision regarding my job. (Reverse Coded)	73	3.33	1.04
	The goals and objectives of my unit are clearly defined.	73	3.67	0.91
	My job responsibilities are clearly defined.	73	3.73	0.87
	I know what is expected of me in this unit.	73	3.92	0.74
Conflict	Too many rules and regulations interfere with how well I am able to do my job. (Reverse coded)	73	2.74	1.01
	I have to do things on my job that are against my better judgement. (Reverse Coded)	72	2.85	0.94
	There are too many people telling me what to do. (Reverse Coded)	72	3.31	0.99
	I am held responsible for things over which I have no control. (Reverse Coded)	73	2.40	0.88

Importance	A lot of people outside this organization are affected by how I do my job.	73	4.12	0.74
	I feel that my job is important to the functioning of my unit.	73	4.07	0.77
	I feel that my work makes a meaningful contribution.	72	3.96	0.72
	I feel that my work is highly important.	73	4.08	0.72
Autonomy	I have a great deal of freedom to decide how to do my job.	73	3.23	1.01
	Control is assigned so that I have authority to make decisions within my own work area.	72	3.26	0.92
	It is up to me to decide how my job should best be done.	73	3.07	0.90
	I have the freedom to complete task assignments without being over supervised.	73	3.62	0.95
Challenge	My job requires a wide range of skills.	73	4.25	0.72
	My job requires a lot of skill and effort to do it well.	73	4.21	0.75
	My job challenges my abilities.	73	4.03	0.80
	I am able to make full use of my knowledge and skills on my job	73	3.95	0.83
Innovation	I am encouraged to develop my ideas.	73	3.49	0.96
	I am encouraged to try new ways of doing my job.	71	3.27	0.99
	My organization encourages me to improve on my boss's methods.	73	3.01	1.06
	My unit encourages me to find new ways around old problems.	73	3.53	0.97
Justice	Decisions about my job are made in a fair manner.	73	3.47	0.91
	Before decisions about my job are made, all of my concerns are heard.	73	3.15	1.00

		Accurate and complete information is collected before decisions are made about my job.	73	3.26	0.91
		I can obtain additional information when decisions about my job are unclear.	73	3.42	0.99
	Support	The organization shows very little support for me. (Reverse coded)	73	2.90	0.93
		This organization really cares about my well-being.	73	2.97	1.03
		This organization cares about my general satisfaction at work.	73	2.79	1.05
		The organization cares about my opinions.	73	2.79	0.97
Team Cohesion					
		Working with members of this unit, my unique skills and talents are valued and utilized.	73	3.63	0.91
		We regularly take time to figure out ways to improve our units work processes.	73	3.32	1.01
		This unit frequently seeks new information that leads us to make important changes.	73	3.33	0.99
		In this unit, someone always makes sure that we stop to reflect on the team's work process.	73	3.16	0.99
		It is clear what the unit is supposed to accomplish together.	73	3.45	0.97
		Unit members believe that we can make teaming work.	73	3.63	0.94
		Every member of this unit understands the team objectives.	73	3.59	0.97
		The unit works in a coordinated manner, without duplicating or wasting efforts.	73	3.36	1.06
		People in this unit often speak up to test assumptions about issues under discussion.	73	3.33	0.97

APPENDIX C

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVALS

ASU Knowledge Enterprise Development
ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

SOCIAL BEHAVIORAL INSTRUCTIONS AND TEMPLATE		
NUMBER	DATE	PAGE
HRP-503a		

Instructions and Notes:

- Depending on the nature of what you are doing, some sections may not be applicable to your research. If so, mark as "NA".
- When you write a protocol, keep an electronic copy. You will need a copy if it is necessary to make changes.

1 Protocol Title

Include the full protocol title: An examination of the effects of organizational culture, climate, and worker attitudes on legal permanency outcomes for children in out-of-home care.

2 Background and Objectives

Provide the scientific or scholarly background for, rationale for, and significance of the research based on the existing literature and how will it add to existing knowledge.

- Describe the purpose of the study.
- Describe any relevant preliminary data or case studies.
- Describe any past studies that are in conjunction to this study.

Purpose of the study: In Arizona, there are over 3,400 children in foster care awaiting adoption. Over one third of these children have yet to be placed in a permanent home (DCS, 2014). In addition, over half of the children in out-home-care spend two years or more in care prior to reunification, and stays in care have lengthened over the past six years. The number of children exiting to adoption has increased, however these children are spending longer times in care before being adopted (DCS, 2014). The Organizational Social Context (OSC) scale measuring culture, climate, and worker attitudes of social service organizations is a highly reputable instrument used in national studies and findings from the OSC have clearly established the link between service outcomes and OSC factors. This study proposes a study using the OSC scale in conjunction with focus groups (see pending IRB application STUDY00003659) to examine the relationship between organizational factors and permanency outcomes. The findings from this proposed study can lead to implications for practice and policy within the child welfare system to improve permanency outcomes for children.

The external site (the Department of Child Safety) will not move forward with their internal review board process until there is approval from ASU's IRB.

3 Data Use

Describe how the data will be used. Examples include:

- Dissertation, Thesis, Undergraduate honors project
- Publication/journal article, conferences/presentations
- Results released to agency or organization
- Results released to participants/parents
- Results released to employer or school
- Other (describe)

The data will primarily be used for the purposes of a Dissertation. Findings will also be included in subsequent publications and conference presentations. In addition, the findings, aggregated and de-identified, will be released to the Department of Child Safety in the form of a report.

4 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Describe the criteria that define who will be included or excluded in your final study sample. If you are conducting data analysis only describe what is included in the dataset you propose to use.
Indicate specifically whether you will target or exclude each of the following special populations:

- Minors (individuals who are under the age of 18)
- Adults who are unable to consent
- Pregnant women
- Prisoners
- Native Americans
- Undocumented individuals

There are two components to this study.

First, administrative data will be requested through the Department of Child Safety. Data requested for this study includes time to permanency for all cases dating one year prior to the study for the inclusive ongoing units. DCS has also requested that this researcher gather administrative data on the number of children in congregate care for analysis with the OSC. The data will not include any identifying information. DCS is being asked to share with this researcher private administrative data from their data base that includes days to permanency (termination of parental rights, adoption, and guardianship) for every case from the included units dating one year prior to the date of the study. Data will be aggregated, and mean scores calculated for each permanency outcome. There is not a data sharing agreement at this point. DCS requires that ASU IRB approve the study first, and then an IRB application is submitted to the DCS IRB.

Second, all ongoing workers in non-specialized units in Pima County, Arizona will be eligible for participation and included in recruitment efforts. All participants are adults who are able to consent.

5 Number of Participants

- Indicate the total number of participants to be recruited and enrolled*:*

Approximately 24 work units consisting of approximately 145 ongoing child safety specialist workers will be recruited for participation. This researcher is estimating an 80% response rate, or a total of 116 participants.

6 Recruitment Methods

- Describe who will be doing the recruitment of participants.
- Describe when, where, and how potential participants will be identified and recruited.
- Describe and attach materials that will be used to recruit participants (attach documents or recruitment script with the application).

The researcher will actively recruit participants with support from the Department of Child Safety (DCS) Regional Office. Potential participants will be identified by DCS Pima region office upon IRB approval from both ASU and DCS. Potential participants are all DCS specialists working in Pima Region in non-specialized ongoing unit. Unit supervisors will be asked to assist in coordinating times for the unit to participate as a whole in the study. The unit supervisors will be informed that the participation of their workers is voluntary, and the workers should not feel pressured to participate. Supervisors will also be asked not to be present during the group meeting to ensure participants feel free to withdraw from the study.

Recruitment materials (attached) will start with the unit supervisor. All non-specialized unit supervisors will be contacted asking to schedule a time for their unit to participate in the survey. All recruitment efforts will occur during business hours.

Upon scheduling of the time/date and location, all workers will be contacted with the attached recruitment document inviting them to participate, informing them of the voluntary nature of the study, and ensuring anonymity. If workers wish to participate, but are not able to attend the meeting, a survey can either be left for them to complete or e-mailed to them.

7 Procedures Involved

Describe all research procedures being performed, who will facilitate the procedures, and when they will be performed. Describe procedures including:

- The duration of time participants will spend in each research activity.
- The period or span of time for the collection of data, and any long term follow up.
- Surveys or questionnaires that will be administered (Attach all surveys, interview questions, scripts, data collection forms, and instructions for participants to the online application).
- Interventions and sessions (Attach supplemental materials to the online application).
- Lab procedures and tests and related instructions to participants.
- Video or audio recordings of participants.
- Previously collected data sets that that will be analyzed and identify the data source (Attach data use agreement(s) to the online application).

Participants will be given 45 minutes to participate in the survey. It is anticipated that the survey will take no more than 45 minutes to complete. It is recommended that the OSC be administered in person to the unit as a whole to increase the response rate. Participants will be invited to participate in the survey at a scheduled in-person time for their unit, however the survey can also be left with the worker for return at a later time and/or emailed.

Ideally, all units will be surveyed within a three month time span. Administrative data will be collected prior to the group meetings. It is approximated that gathering the administrative data will take no more than two weeks. There is no long term follow-up.

8 Compensation or Credit

- Describe the amount and timing of any compensation or credit to participants.
- Identify the source of the funds to compensate participants
- Justify that the amount given to participants is reasonable.
- If participants are receiving course credit for participating in research, alternative assignments need to be put in place to avoid coercion.

All participants will be offered light refreshments such as coffee and cookies at the time they participate in the study. In additional all participants will be offered the opportunity to enter a drawing for one of ten $25 gift cards to various locations in Tucson. This compensation is reasonable for the 45 minutes the participants are asked to participate. It is not excessive.

The refreshments and gift cards will be purchased by the researcher by personal funds from the researcher that were awarded as part of a fellowship for the researchers' graduate studies.

9 Risk to Participants

List the reasonably foreseeable risks, discomforts, or inconveniences related to participation in the research. Consider physical, psychological, social, legal, and economic risks.

The risks to participants in this study are minimal. Participants will lose some time as they participate in the survey. Effort will be made to reduce this inconvenience. Surveys will occur per the workers schedule and at their office to reduce the time away from work they are dedicating to the study. The option of taking the survey at a later time will help to reduce the inconvenience.

10 Potential Benefits to Participants

Realistically describe the potential benefits that individual participants may experience from taking part in the research. Indicate if there is no direct benefit. Do not include benefits to society or others.

There are no direct benefits to the participants other than the nominal compensation. However, participants may experience feeling heard, or listened to, an indirect benefit. By participating in the study, participants also have the chance to contribute to the literature.

11 Privacy and Confidentiality

Describe the steps that will be taken to protect subjects' privacy interests. "Privacy interest" refers to a person's desire to place limits on with whom they interact or to whom they provide personal information. Click here for additional guidance on ASU Data Storage Guidelines.

Describe the following measures to ensure the confidentiality of data:

- Who will have access to the data?
- Where and how data will be stored (e.g. ASU secure server, ASU cloud storage, filing cabinets, etc.)?
- How long the data will be stored?
- Describe the steps that will be taken to secure the data during storage, use, and transmission. (e.g., training, authorization of access, password protection, encryption, physical controls, certificates of confidentiality, and separation of identifiers and data, etc.).
- If applicable, how will audio or video recordings will be managed and secured. Add the duration of time these recordings will be kept.
- If applicable, how will the consent, assent, and/or parental permission forms be secured. These forms should separate from the rest of the study data. Add the duration of time these forms will be kept.
- If applicable, describe how data will be linked or tracked (e.g. masterlist, contact list, reproducible participant ID, randomized ID, etc.).

If your study has previously collected data sets, describe who will be responsible for data security and monitoring.

Ensuring privacy and that the information remains confidential is of utmost importance in this study. Participants are being asked to report on the culture and climate of their work unit. It is imperative that the units remain unidentified in all reporting of the data.

This student researcher and the Primary Investigator and the two committee members will be the only ones that will have access to the data. The data will be stored in a secure file cabinet at ASU. Hard copies will be stored for 3 years. Electronic data will be stored on a password protected computer. Once data is entered into the electronic software process, all identifying information will be removed – unlinking any identifying information.

The list with the work groups will be in a separate locked cabinet. The only identifying information is the link to the work unit, information that will be unlinked and separated.

Reporting of findings will not identify any unit. All data will be aggregated to increase the level of privacy needed to protect the participants.

12 Consent Process

Describe the process and procedures process you will use to obtain consent. Include a description of:

- Who will be responsible for consenting participants?
- Where will the consent process take place?
- How will consent be obtained?
- If participants who do not speak English will be enrolled, describe the process to ensure that the oral and/or written information provided to those participants will be in that language. Indicate the language that will be used by those obtaining consent. Translated consent forms should be submitted after the English is approved.

The researcher is responsible for the consent process. Participants will be informed of the voluntary nature of the study both verbally and in writing.

Participants will be informed that their agreement to stay and participate in the study subsequent to receiving the verbal and written information letter indicates that they consent to participate.

To safeguard anonymity, participants will not be asked to sign a consent letter. Participants will be provided an information letter indicating the purpose of the study, the risks, benefits, and contact information.

13 Training

Provide the date(s) the members of the research team have completed the CITI training for human participants. This training must be taken within the last 4 years. Additional information can be found at: Training.

Francie Julien-Chinn, MSW: 8/27/13
Dr. Cynthia Lietz: 4/2/13
Dr. Natasha Mendoza: 9/13/12
Dr. Jeffery Lacasse: 12/15/15

Dr. Mendoza and Dr. Lacasse are collaborators on this project. They will not be involved in the collection of data however will have access to the raw data. Dr. Mendoza and Dr. Lacasse will assist the student researcher in data analysis.

APPROVAL: EXPEDITED REVIEW

Cynthia Lietz
Public Service and Community Solutions, College of (PUBSRV)
602/496-0404 clietz@asu.edu

Dear Cynthia Lietz:

On 12/29/2015 the ASU IRB reviewed the following protocol:

Type of Review:	Initial Study
Title:	An examination of the effects of organizational culture, climate, and worker attitudes on legal permanency outcomes for children in out-of-home care.
Investigator:	Cynthia Lietz
IRB ID:	STUDY00003659
Category of review:	(7)(b) Social science methods, (5) Data, documents, records, or specimens, (7)(a) Behavioral research
Funding:	None
Grant Title:	None
Grant ID:	None

Documents Reviewed:	• OSC Survey, Category: Measures (Survey questions/Interview questions /interview guides/focus group questions); • Additional Demographic Questions, Category: Measures (Survey questions/Interview questions /interview guides/focus group questions); • PANAS Survey, Category: Measures (Survey questions/Interview questions /interview guides/focus group questions); • Recruitment Script, Category: Recruitment Materials; • Consent Letter - Survey.pdf, Category: Consent Form; • IRB with clarifications, Category: IRB Protocol;

The IRB approved the protocol from 12/29/2015 to 12/28/2016 inclusive. Three weeks before 12/28/2016 you are to submit a completed Continuing Review application and required attachments to request continuing approval or closure.

If continuing review approval is not granted before the expiration date of 12/28/2016 approval of this protocol expires on that date. When consent is appropriate, you must use final, watermarked versions available under the "Documents" tab in ERA-IRB.

In conducting this protocol you are required to follow the requirements listed in the INVESTIGATOR MANUAL (HRP-103).

Sincerely,

IRB Administrator

cc: Francie Julien-Chinn Francie Julien-Chinn
Jeffrey Lacasse
Natasha Mendoza

APPROVAL: EXPEDITED REVIEW

Cynthia Lietz
Public Service and Community Solutions, College of
(PUBSRV) 602/496-0404
clietz@asu.edu

Dear Cynthia

Lietz:

On 9/8/2016 the ASU IRB reviewed the following protocol:

Type of Review:	Modification
Title:	An examination of the effects of organizational factors on legal permanency outcomes for children in out-of-home care.
Investigator:	Cynthia Lietz
IRB ID:	STUDY00003659
Category of review:	(mm) Minor modification
Funding:	None
Grant Title:	None
Grant ID:	None

Documents Reviewed:	• Recruitment Script - Reminder , Category: Recruitment Materials; • PANAS Survey, Category: Measures (Survey questions/Interview questions /interview guides/focus group questions); • Full Survey in Qualtrics (COHA and PANAS), Category: Measures (Survey questions/Interview questions /interview guides/focus group questions); • Consent Letter.pdf, Category: Consent Form; • Additional Demographic Questions, Category: Measures (Survey questions/Interview questions /interview guides/focus group questions); • Gift card survey, Category: Other (to reflect anything not captured above); • IRB with clarifications, Category: IRB Protocol;

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